

John Hall.

THE CHVRCHES DELIVERANCE,

Containing

Meditations and short notes vppon
The booke of HESTER.

In remembrance of the wonderfull deliue-
rance from the Gunpowder-Treason.

By

THOMAS COOPER.



AT LONDON.

Imprinted by G. Eld for T. Adams, and are to be sold
at the white Lyon in Pauls Church-yard.

1609.

John Hall

THE

CHURCH

of St. Andrew

Worship

at the Church of St. Andrew

on the 1st of the month

of the year 1800

at the Church of St. Andrew

1800

AT LONDON

Printed by G. and J. Smith, and are to be sold
at the Church of St. Andrew

1800

To the right worshipfull, and
 truly religious Ladies, the mother and
 the daughter, The Lady Katherine Rotherham, and
 the Lady Elizabeth Wakerings my very good Aunt,
 and Cousine; Beloued in the LORD, grace
 and peace in GOD the Father
 through IESVS CHRIST
 our common Sauour.

Right Christian Ladies, whome I loue in the
 truth, till IESVS CHRIST be persited in
 you. It hath pleased the LORD of glory, by
 a long, yet mild and fatherly visitation, of
 late to summon me, his vnprofitable seruant to make ready
 my Account: In the casting vp whereof finding my selfe
 indebted vnto your Ladyships, for many christian and ex-
 traordinary kindneses conferred vpon me, a dispiſed brāch
 and out-caſt in the world: I haue indeauoured in theſe my
 poore laboures to make acknowledgement of my debt, not
 with any purpose to clear the ſcore (for how ſhould true mē-
 bers of Christs body not be euer bound to each other) but ra-
 ther with intent to prouoke to a further debt: becauſe the
 debt of loue, as it ought alwaies to be payd, ſo it muſt alwaies
 be due, and the more it is paid the more the debt is increaſed.
 Til it be at length persited, and ſo fully recompenced in
 heauen. whether ſeeing it pleaſeth my god very mercifully
 to haſten me by keeping me through many tedious and lung-
 ging infirmities; in an earneſt hungring and fainting af-
 ter my deliuerance; therfore haue I rather haſtened to per-
 forme this duty vnto your Ladyships, as to whom in regard
 of your places ſuch mementos, from a withered branche

The Epistle Dedicatory.

cannot be vnseasonable: and most seasonable on his part, so
bee preformed, who while hee hath tyme, and can doe
no other good, yet hath obtained mercy of the LORD,
to put his seruants in mind of his wonderfull mercies tow-
ards them; that the memoriall thereof may hold them in due
thankfulnesse vnto so gracious a father, that so their hap-
pinesse in this life may be a pledge vnto them of that glori-
ous crowne which remaines for the Saintes in that blessed
Kingdome: These are my heartes desire vnto our gracious
GOD for you. And that you may be happily furthered ther-
to, and haue a true and lively glisse to behold the bounty of
our GOD, I haue bin bold to committe to your remembrance
that wonderful deliuerance of our Church and State,
from that horrible plot of poulder-Treason; wherein eu-
ery true hearted Christian and Subiect may take a full view
of al GODS former mercies towards him, and if he do be-
lieue, may see in the same a full assurance of what soeuer
blessings of GOD are yet laid up in store for him. The
greatnesse whereof, howsoeuer I haue heretofore endea-
uored once and againe to measure, and so commend my scant-
ling thereof, to the due consideration of a thankful heart
yet seeing the measure of that blessing is like the waters of
the sanctuary, which the more they were measured, the more
vnm measurable they did appeare, till at length they became a
deepe, that could not be passed ouer. Therefore I haue bin glad
to take this opportunity of my dayes yet lengthned out, once
againe to measure this great deepe: And by an history of
a like wonderful deliuerance, to reuiue the dead memory
therof in the eares of a secure and vnthinkefull world. That
so I might both pay my vowes vnto my GOD for my life
of late renned me as a prey, and as neere as I may haue my
connerfation in heauen, imploving the small residue of my
wretched life in meditations of GODS wonderful mercies
which

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*which is the onely seruice that the saints performe in hea-
men. Oh what a glorious thing it is to be thankfull, when by
dooing this duty we come nearest to the Saints in glory! And
how wil this wonderful deliuerance teach vs to be thanke-
full? How is this deliuerance of the Iewes from Hamans
malice a most liuely glasse to behold our deliuerance from
the bloody Papiſts. And may not the LORD lengthen out
my threed untill I haue finiſhed this ſtory. This that I now
tender you is but onely the gate into the cittie, if it pleaſe
GOD that I may go through the Cittie (as Ionas did) who
knoweth whether by that time Ninine may repent and
turne, and ſo the LORD may repent him of the euil, and
reuiue the good that is ready to dye. The patient abiding
of the righteous is ioy, and he that beleeueth maketh
not haſte: yet if we beleeuē, we ſhall ſee greater things
then theſe, and bleſſed are wee if we ſee a farre off. A
leſſon which for a farewell I do heartily commend vnto
your Ladyſhips, not onely to ſee into the preſent, but to be-
hold a farre off, to looke vp to Moſes to the recompence
of the reward, and not to eſteeme to be accounted the ſonne
of Pharaohs daughter. If we ſee not the preſent bleſſings
how can we ſee a farre off? And yet we may ſo doate on the
preſent, as not to deſire to ſee a far off. and if we deſire not,
is not the Lord iuſt to giue vs our preſent deſire, and ſend
leanneſſe into our ſoules. Behold therefore your preſent
happineſſe in that wonderfull deliuerance, yet looke vp with
Moſes, and ſee therein alſo your future happineſſe. And ſo
I heartily commend your Ladyſhips to the view of this
glasse, and therein alſo to the mercy of the almighty, who
giue you wiſdome to redeeme the time by ſeeing your faces
often herein, and hauing viewed, not to forget what Iacob
did gratiouſly rememb'r, and what our Sauour wiſhed to*

*Genes. 31.
I uke, 17.*

be

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*be remembred of his Disciples : So shall you preuaile with
GOD, and find fauour with men : your age shall bee a
crowne of glory, and your posterity shall be blessed: They shall
be of you which shall build the old waste places & shall be
called the repairers of the breach: the stones of the field
shall be in league with you & the beasts of the field shall
be at peace with you: you shall laugh at destruction &
death and shall not be affraid of the beasts of the earth.
GOD hath and shall deliuer you from all aduersity, and you
shall see the felicity of the chosen : these blessings the
LORD of glory increase vpon your Ladyships, to your full
perfection in IESVS CHRIST. To whose blessed pro-
tection I most heartily commend both you and yours.*

From my house at Couentry

Ianuary 1609.

Your poore kinsman, most
bounden in the Lord Iesus.

THOMAS COOPER.

To the Christian and discerning

Reader, wisdom to see the plague, and
grace to hide him-
selfe.



Hen great blessings breed security,
and prophanesse, wee must looke for
sodaine iudgments. These are *begun*
and haue *increased* in the land, so much
the more *fearefull*, because they are *es-*
pecially spiritual and the rather *dange-*
rous, because they are *lesse discerned*, or,
discerned onely with a carnall eye, which
conceiuing them *natural* and *ordinary*,
yeeld them onely carnall and ordinary respect: Euery man pro-
uides for his owne, but the house of the Lord, lyeth waste: And
so we flatter our selues that all is well, when nothing can bee
well, it going ill with the principall, *we may sowe much but reape*
little, and what wee gather is put into a broken bagge, because the
Lords house lyeth waste, and euery man lookes to his owne. Our
great deliuerance from that diuelish plot of the poulder treason,
as it was wonderfull, so it hath passed as a *dreame*, or as a nine
daies wonder. And behold now we are awoke, *we are a hunge-*
ry, pinched with famine *both of body and soule*: The bird was in
the snare, but we haue let her loose. A blessing was offered, but
the *messe of pottage* hath bene preferred: *Benaydad* findes fauour,
and is become a *broken reed* to *Israell*: and may not our hands bee
pierced therewith? *Yea the whole heart is sick and the head is heavy:*
& from the crown of the head vnto the sole of the foot, there is no-
hing whole therein: & which is the greatest misery, though there
be *bakon* in *Gilead* yet the hurt of the *Virgine Israel* is not healed.
Because the dead flies doe corrupt the pretious oyntment
of the *Apothecary*, and the hurt of the daughters of Gods people,
is healed with *sweete words*; crying *peace peace* so that we *looked*
for peace, but behold trouble, because the *Arme of flesh* hath decei-
ued vs, and we haue not rested vpon the *strong Tower*: yet the
Lord

The Epistle to the Reader.

liueth and is good vnto Israel, euen vnto those that are true of heart. The wise man seeth the vally of Achor, and entereth therein as into the doore of hope: And though the plague deuoure but the hindermost part of the hoast, yet he sees the plague with the eyes of faith, and feare, and so bids him-selfe, by departing from euill: that so not being partaker in the sinne, hee may not share in the iudgement: yet must iudgement begin at the house of God, that so the faithfull being tryed may find rest, while the pit is digged for the wicked. And whosoever seekes vnto the Lord God of Israel in his affliction, hee is found of him: The more Israel is oppressed, the more it increaseth, and by this we know that the Lord fauoureth vs, because he suffreth not our enemies to triumph ouer vs: Oh that wee could triumph ouer them in the remembrance of that wonderful deliuerance, that our God hath wrought for vs! How might we by this haue triumphed, if we had pursued that victory and rooted out Ameleck, that would haue rooted out vs; but al for the best. Ameleck must remaine as a pricke in our sides, to let out our corrupt and prophane blood; our enemies must yet be further meanes of our purging and preparing: that when the stones are throgly squared, Gods house may bee perfectly aduanced: And the setting vp of the Arke will be the finall ouerthrow of Dagon. In patience therefore (deere bretheren) committe wee our selues into the handes of our faithfull Creator. That his hand is not shortned, we may see in that wonderful deliuerance. In memoriall whereof, I haue now the third time, tendred those meditations, that I might pay my vovves vnto the Lord, for the sanctifying of that generall deliuerance by a speciall deliuerance vnto me: & the rather, because the Lord hath euen now of late deliuered me out of the horrible pit, and restored vnto me the Ioy of his saluation, that I might declare the wonders of the Lord in the land of the liuing: The Lord hath renued me as an example vnto them which shall in time to come beleue this wonderful worke. And yet, (blessed be our faithfull God) this is a day of good tidings. The bush is not consumed: the scepter of Antichrist is broken, his fiene repenteth, and the Lord raigneth, and hell is enlarged. And why should I hold my peace? Surely if my fight
style

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sayle me not, I see in that deliuerance, *Ameleck* vtter ouerthrow: Oh that *Moses* handes may be held vp still, that *Ameleck* may be destroyed from vnder heauen, for the better strengthening of my weake knees and feeble hands to the due meditation of that wonderful deliuerance! I haue spared some few houres from my publicke studie, and spent them in the meditation of a like wonderfull deliuerance of the Church of God in former times. *Very malicious* was the *emie* when nothing would satisfie him but the vtter rooting out of the Church of God. And surely much more malicious our enemies, that had plotted the extreame ouerthrow both of Church and common-wealth. 2. *Very patient and wise* was the Lord in giuing the aduersary so far his desire, as euen to haue brought his mischief to the poynt of execution; to make his confusion the greater, and the Churches deliuerance more admirable & comfortable. And surely that our *Aduersaries* had brought their *plotte* within lesse then eight houres execution: after two yeates secure contriuiting, and ripening thereof: This as it magnified the admirable prouidence of the Lord in ordering the actions of the wicked, so it tended to the greater astonishment and confusion of Gods enemies, and, notwithstanding the carelesse security of the *Atheist*, yet hath, and shall make, to the eternal comfort of the true beleuer. 3. *Wonderfull* was the Lord in disapoynting the practize of *Haman* and deliuering of his Church: but that the *emie* was cast in the pit, which he had digged for others. Oh! how did this magnifie the iustice of God, how did it confirme the faith of the afflicted? And surely did not the Lord shew himselfe much more wonderfull in our deliuerance? Was it a small matter to deliuer vs as a prey out of the snare of the Fowler, vnlesse also our aduersaries were consumed with the poulder which they had prepared to blow vs vp, by an ouer-ruling hand of the Almighty?

This was the Lords doing, and it ought to be maruailous in thy eyes: And marke what I tell thee? Neuer looke to see the face of God in glory for thy final release out of all thy troubles, vnlesse thou dost see the especiall loue of thy God in this deliuerance: and so still desirest to see further, so the increase of thy most holy faith; that so
A *belonging*

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beleeking thou maist see greater things than these: yea best able to see a farre off, even the finall deliuerance of the Church out of all her troubles. For thy further direction and prouoking therefore to this Christian duty, In the feare of God make vse of this history which I doe tender thee as a glasse, wherein thou maist daily view that wonderfull deliuerance. I haue as the Lord hath inabled me, considered thy weakenesse, and prouided accordingly: That thy edge may be still sharpened, and the dullnesse thereof prevented. I haue deuided the story in it parts: tendering thee onely for a taste, some briefe obseruations on the two first Chapters: which containe onely the preface and the preparation to the history: yet furnished and especially concluded, dy the diuine dispensation, with such fit variety of matter, as may serue thee well for a full enterview of Gods prouidence in the deliuerance of Princes and Kingdomes from treasons and conspiracies. Here for the time I make my first pause: studying breuity, because this wanton age cannot indure long discourses, and my health will not indure long studies: if thy appetite be sharpened, pray for health, and liberty of the Gospell: and (so thou lust not after quailes) thou maist shortly by Gods mercy haue more variety. For the present consider my weakenesse, and magnifie Gods power: let the Printer beare his owne burchen, and yet as he hath prouided, so ease thy selfe, and him, and me: Read with prayer, appetite, and humility: So maist thou attaine the kernell: And for the shell neglect it: as if it speake the language of Canaan; let it guide thee to our common Citty which is aboue: whether I am halting: and to this end, tender thee this light, that wee may happily meete there. The Lord hasten his worke, confound Antichrist, perfect the gathering in of the first borne, set vp his standerd, and glorifie his sonne, in all his Sayntes.

So be it.

Thyne in our common Sanction,

THOMAS COOPER.

Observations out of the first CHAPTER.

1. When the wicked are in prosperity then is the Church of God neere great danger.
2. The Chronology of the history examined and determined.
3. Of the truth of the Scripture.
4. The wicked enjoy the greatest blessings in this life.
5. God is the Author of government.
6. The benefit of government.
7. The wicked do abuse their prosperity to the maintenance of the flesh.
8. Prosperity of the wicked breedeth security.
9. God translates Kingdomes, and remoueth the seates thereof.
10. That Feasting is Lawfull.
11. The conditions thereof: who may Feast.
12. What causes may further it.
13. The manner thereof, and matter.
14. The end of Feasting.
 15. The vertues of the heathen how to be indged off.
16. Courtly state, and life,
17. policy of worldlings confounded.
18. Princes not vnneccessarily to burthen their subiects.
19. They are especially to labour for inward glory.
20. Like Prince like people.
21. Wicked Princes sent for the sinnes of the people.
22. Princes not to shew their magnificence in belly-cheere.
23. Dauncing of men and women together vnlawfull.
24. God punisheth sin with sin.
25. Drunkennesse the effect of Feasting.
26. The use of holy Ironies in the word.
27. Marke of drunkennesse.
28. Prophane persons abuse their wines to bee especially baites of lust.
29. Wines how to be chosen.
30. How to be used.
31. The wicked abuse Gods blessings to their further condemnation.
32. Gods blessings to the wicked prove scourges in this life.
33. Courtiers slaves to their Princes lusts.
34. The Courtly life how to be accepted and used.
35. Rules for behaviour in the Court.
36. The wicked distracted and confounded.

Observations vpon the

- confounded in all their busi-
nesse.
37. Husbands duties to their
wiues, and wiues to the r hus-
bands: Wicked Princes keepe
state by anger.
38. Of anger and the occasions.
39. The lawfulness thereof &
circumstances required therein.
Causellisse anger how to be re-
pressed and reformed.
40. Cloakes of sinne are meanes
of increase thereof.
41. Worldly Councillors how
vainly employed.
42. Courtiers Vsuall brokers
for sinne and contriuers of
each others punishment.
43. Councillors to bee chosen
out of the Nobility.
43. 44. Qualities of good coun-
cellors, especially they must be
religious.
45. How to discerne them.
45. Princes must not be strange
to their subiects but be affable.
46. Tyrants their markes and
punishment.
47. Wicked pretend Law for the
satisfying of their mischiefes.
48. Whether a man may be his
owne iudge?
49. How a man may be wiues
in his owne cause
50. How a man should be ap-
proned when he stands vpon
the testimony of his innocency
- to the world.
51. Wherein a man may bee
iudge in his owne case.
52. Princes are to referre the-
selues to the iudgement of
their lawes.
53. Wicked Princes employ
their seruants in base purposes
and they are willingly slaues
thereto.
54. Sinnes of great ones exemp-
lary.
55. Politicians in satisfiing of
the lusts of wicked Princes
prouide for their owne.
55. Flutterers and malicious
persons abuse Princes with
whisperings, and surmises.
56. Euidence must bee of things
knowne not surmised, and of
such as know the party.
57. Mallice and flattery vnfit
accusers.
58. Punishment must not exceed
the nature of sinne.
59. Iudges must not accept per-
sons in iudgement.
60. Worlaling preferre the pri-
uate before the publicke goodd.
61. Wicked haue glorious clokes
for their end and purposes.
62. Of exemplary iustice when
to be vsed.
63. Terror no breeder of true
loue, where how to reclaime a
froward wife &c.
64. Wicked Princes easily yeeld

Second Chapter.

- to bad counsell.
65. Wicked instrumēt of the wil
filling of Gods righteous will in
their punishments for his glory
and the good of the Church.
66. God is the author of promo-
tion.
67. The prosperity of the wic-
ked short and dangerous.
68. Wicked in persecuting their
lusts serue Gods righteous wil.
69. Husbonds are to rule ouer
their wiues.
70. And how far.
71. Wicked must free their sin by
making it common to others.
72. Lawes to be published in the
vulgar tongue.

Obseruations out of the second CHAPTER.

1. Sin how it ceaseth in the wic-
ked.
2. Gods providence discovered
herein.
3. Occasions of the ceasing of sin
in the wicked.
4. How sin is bridleed in the
wicked by Gods spirit, & how
by other meanes.
5. Impossible for the wicked to
forsake sinne.
6. The rage of the wicked shall
cease for the good of the
Church.
7. Anger must bee renounced,
and how.
8. The conscience calls the wic-
ked to an account in this life.
9. The vse of it in them.
10. The particular euidence of
conscience.
11. The accusation of the con-
science in the wicked, an
hindrance to repentance.
12. Credit in the wicked opposed
to conscience, whereby repen-
tance is hindered.
13. Gods iustice herein.
14. The wicked how choosers
hereof.
15. The conscience Gods execu-
tioner in the condemnation of
the wicked.
16. False rules whereby the wic-
ked iustifie their actions.
17. How they dul and dead the
conscience.
18. Conscience and credit in
the godly go together.
19. Lawes what perpetuall, and
how to bee antiquated.
20. Worldlings why earnest for
the eternizing of their lawes.
21. Vowes and promises what,
and how to be kept, how to bee
ordered.
22. The soueraignty of conscience.
23. The wicked in the troubles
of conscience runne to the
world, and carnal helps.
24. Courtiers drowne their prin-
ces in pleasure.

Observations vpon the

25. Wounded conscience how truly to be releued.
26. Second marriage not vlawful.
27. Beauty warily to be proposed in the choyce of a wife.
28. Godly avoid such occasions as haue intyced them vnto sin.
29. Prophane Courtiers ready to satisfie the lust of their Prince.
30. The best gifts of the wicked
31. Matters of state to be carried with complement.
32. Wherebe a wife to be chosen, whether abroad in an other country, or at home.
33. Tyrants prey and rot, on the goods and bodies of their people.
34. Misery of such as liue vnder Tyrants.
35. Princes how farre to command their subiects.
36. The confusion of Idolatry and carnal wisdom.
37. Natures infirmities to bee cleansed and abstinency to bee vsed therein.
38. Outlandish fashions vlawfull.
39. Painting of women vlawfull.
40. Young heads fit to giue counsel to tyrants.
41. Sinne impatient of delay.
42. Sinne how to bee preuented.
43. Motions of Gods spirit how to be entertained.
44. The prophane guise of effeminate Princes.
45. That Mordecai was not carried away in the Captiuitie.
46. Scripture not to bee strayed.
47. Gods providence in planting his children filly, and for his glory and their good.
48. Also in planting the godly among the wicked.
49. Gods children remoued out of their habitation and why.
50. Gods children kept vndefiled among the wicked.
51. The Godly best company.
52. Why we may conuerse with the wicked and how.
53. GOD giues his children fauour in the eyes of the wicked.
54. God no acceptor of persons.
55. The continuance of the Church and condition thereof, to the worlds end.
56. The lot thereof to be scattered vpon the face of the earth.
57. Gods faithfulness in preserving the Church for euer.
58. The names to bee giuen to children.
59. Genealogies how recorded in the world.
60. Children shall not bee punished for the fathers offense.

Second Chapter.

sence.

62. God continueth and blesteth the posterity of the righteous.
63. Posterity how to be preferred.
64. The lot of Gods children to go into Captivity.
65. Church how prepared to captivity.
66. Gods iudgements are to be recorded and meditated.
67. Benefits of Gods iudgements.
68. God often changeth the outward prosperity & visibility of his Church.
69. Changes of the Church tend to the exceeding good thereof.
70. The world confounded by the changes of the Church.
71. Uses of the afflictions of the Church.
72. Great ones drinke deepe of the cuppe of vengeance.
73. God useth great & mighty enemies for the chastning of his Church—as
74. Standing with his iustice & also
75. With his mercy.
76. How to make flesh our friend.
77. God often chasticeth his children with the same rodle.
78. God chasticeth his children in measure and by degrees.
79. Gods children are to comfort and relieue each others in their troubles.
80. The bounty of Gods children is no snare, but especially labourers, the good of the soule.
81. God provides for his children in trouble with the safety of a good conscience.
82. Whether lawfull for Christians now to change their names?
82. Those which are raised to up greatest dignities, are usually in most desperate, and low estate.
83. Kindred to bareheaded.
84. Gods children left orphanes in the world.
85. The more excellent gifts of nature, need the straighter bridles.
86. The gifts of nature being sanctified are good meanes of preferment.
87. How to use natures gifte aright.
88. Adoption lawfull though—
89. A thing not commanded, but left arbitrary
90. Who especially to be adopted.
91. Ends of adoption.
92. Orphanes to be provided for.
93. God aduanceth his children by sayra and likely meanes.
94. Gods children to yeeld to present necessity, keeping them selves from apparant euill

Observations vpon the

- enill, and depending on Gods
protection.
95. Gods children the nearer
preferment the greater extre-
mities
96. God prepares his Church
by afflictions to great bles-
sings.
97. God breaketh the force of
tentations, and provideth pre-
servatiues against them.
98. Gods children find fauour in
the eyes of strangers.
99. Wicked haue the shadowes of
many excellent vertues..
100. Markes of true liberality.
121. Officers are to be faith-
full in distributing according
to their charge.
102. God raiseth his to prefer-
ment by degrees.
103. What attendance fit for
each sex.
104. Gods giues signes of his fa-
uor to his children.
105. The best is due and bestow-
ed on Gods Childre in this life.
106. Truth may bee concealed,
and how.
107. Cautions to be obserued in
concealing truth.
108. Religion when and how to
be giuen account for.
109. GOD disposeth the
weaknesse of his children,
in the accomplishment of his
mercy towards them.
110. Gods children season each
other with grane counsell and
wholesome instructions.
111. Silence a speciall lesson for
Courtiers.
112. The safety of Gods church
ought to be our speciall care
113. Obedience to lawfull au-
thority, a true marke of the
child of God.
114. Sincere obedience rather
respecteth the power of the
Commaunder, then the
worth of the thing comman-
ded.
115. True obedience is perfor-
med as well in absence as in
presence.
116. Parents how farre to
extend their care for their
children.
117. Care how it may stand
with the prouidence of
God.
118. A marke of the wicked to
riot out time.
119. Tyme how to be re-
deemed.
120. Another badge of the
wicked to riot out Gods good
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The Churches Deliuerance.

CHAPTER. I.

Argument and parts.



In *Abazneroth* maketh a great banquet to his Nobles and Captaines : so doth the Queene to her Ladies and followers, to the 10. *verse*. 2. The King causeth *Vashti* the Queene to be sent for into his presence, who refusing, is by the aduice of his Princes and Council put from all regall societie, to the end of the Chapter.

Vers. 1. In those dayes,] that is, in the peaceable and prosperous raigne of *Xerxes*, then fell out this danger of the Church, then did the Lord performe this deliuerance ; as if the spirit could declare vnto vs that

When the wicked are in greatest security, and prosperitie, then is the Church of God subiect, and neere greatest danger,

Obser. 1.

The wickeds
prosperity is
the meanes of
their greater
affliction

1. So doth the Lord hereby make way for the greater confusion of the wicked, in giuing them vp to such a reprobate sense, that whereas they should vse their prosperitie to the glory of God, and good of others, it turnes on the contrary to the speciall hurt of those, for whose sakes specially they do enioy it.

2 And the wicked in this state, haue more power, and leisure to doe mischief.

3 As for the Church of God, it is more subiect to contagion, by smelling of the wickeds prosperity, yea happily escapes not defiling thereby, and therefore had need of such preseruatiues, and purgation to preuent, or purge out her drosse.

Vse. 1. And is it then good wisdom to shroud the Church vnder there prosperity, by making leagues with

B

them

them, who are the likeliest rods to correct the same? May we not see herein the folly of Gods children, who many times proue stirrups to raise such to promotion who when they are aloft, will proue their greatest scourges? ought we not to mourne for the prosperity of the wicked, and then to prepare our selues to some great trials presaged thereby? Let vs wisely looke our owne faces in this glasse and see whether our daunger, was not neere, when we were most secure, reioycing our selues in the hight of our prosperity, and let vs keepe downe those *Canaanites* that they may not prosper vnder vs.

Of *Ahasuerus*, That is, the Hereditary Prince.

Obse. 1. Whereby (me thinks) that great controuersie among the Interpreters, what King is here ment, whither *Cambises*, *Darius*, or *Xerxes*, may easily be resolved. That it cannot be *Darius*, i. because he was not the hereditary Prince, in that he was chosen by an accident, and therefore it must needs be *Xerxes*, who not only was hereditary from his father, in that he was the naturall sonne of *Darius*, but further also by the mothers side may be truly called the Hereditary Prince, as being borne of *Atossa*, the daughter of *Cyrus* his great grand-father. Secondly, it may be plainly resolved from *India* to *Ethiopia*, or a hundreth and seauen and twenty Prouinces: which cannot be vnderstood, neither of *Cambises* because hee had not so large a dominion, neither reigned full 8. years, whereas this *Ahasuerus* is afterward recorded to haue reigned 12: neither of *Darius* because so large a kingdom is not ascribed to him by any memorial, & therefore it must need decipher *Xerxes* vnto vs. And surely how fitly did the Lord dispose the trial of his Church in his time, who as by his basenes and intemperancy, he was made an instrument to bring the Church of God to the pits brinke: so was he, after the deliuerance of the Church, made a memorable spectacle of Gods wrath, in the ouerthrow of that his huge army by a small hand-full of the Grecians, according to that of the spirit of God. *The righteous*

Pro. 11. 8.

escape out of trouble, and the wicked come in their stead.

stead. It followeth,

This is Asasueros) by this repeating of the name *Obfer. 1.*
in this *Parenthesis* with an adition of distinction, we may *Auoucheth*
obserue the care of the spirit of God to iustifie the truth of the truth of
the story by a circumstance of Cronology, and thereby are the Scripture.
taught; That whereas this name *Asasueros* signifieth
an Hereditary Prince, and was giuen vsually to the Kings of
Persia as an ensigne of honor (as *Pharaoh* and *Ptolomy* was
to the Egiptians) 1. that our speciall triall of the truth of
the Scripture; is from y exact agreement in the computati-
on of time, 2. That ciuill titles of honor are to be giuen e-
uen to prophane magistrats.

That raigned from India euen to Ethyopia]

Here the holy Ghost sets out vnto us the large bounds of
this Persian Monarchy, when it drew neere to it dissolution,
out of which we are taught many notable obseruations. *As.*

That euen wicked and reprobate Princes haue attained
very large & fruitfull dominions: the reason is 1. because the *Doctr.*
Lord hath free power to giue the earth to whome it plea- *The wicked*
seth him. 2. because the Lord vseth them as scourges to the *enjoy great*
wicked that so his iustice might appeare more gloriously. 3. *prosperity.*
He shewes his great bounty and long suffering to the wicked
in giuing them herein more then their hearts can desire
to make them without excuse. 4. he makes way for the brea-
thing and increase of his Church, which hath both some
shelter in these large dominions and hath wonne some
hereby to God, and lastly hereby hee prepares the wicked
to their greater destruction, who the more they receaue *Luke. 12.*
shall haue more required at their hands, and the mighty
shall be mightely tormented: Hence we learne not to mar- *Psal. 37.*
ueile or fret at y great prosperity of Gods enemies, neither *Psal. 72.*
to enuy them therein, nor desire to be like them, assuring our
selues that all there prosperity shall serue the Churches
turne, and if they y knew not God are thus recompenced on *Mat. 5.*
earth, how great then may we imagine our reward to be in
Heauen. *Raigned]* in that the holy Ghost implies a peace-
able subiection of so many diuers Prouinces and

God is the au-
thor of govern-
ment.
5. Doctr.
Psa. 75.

1.
Rom. 13. 2.

2.

3.
Iere. 27. 19.

4.

Math. 22.

Obfer. 6.
The benefit of
gouernment.

1. Sam 12.
Iudg. 17.
1. Tim 2.

different nations both in language and nature vnder one Monarch, we learne here also by a consequent, that gouernment is of the Lord. *Pro. 8.* by him Kings raigne, it is the Lord that sets vp and pulleth downe, for he onely makes to be of one mind in an house, he only knits the hearts in such vnity, he only can bridle the different natures and conditions of the most barbarous; and therefore as our Christiani liberty must not take away ciuill obedience, so must our ciuill obedience be also for conscience, not with Popish reseruations, or *Anabaptisticall* presumptions, but we must euen pray for the life of *Nebuchadnezzar* and in the peace of his city we shall haue peace, remembring that seeing God appoints gouernment, therefore he is aboute it that so we may giue vnto *Cesar* the body and goods with a good conscience, which are due vnto him, and reserue vnto our God the rule of the conscience, which is his immediate peculiar aboute *Cesars*.

Ouer an hundred and twenty Prouinces.

See wee here the great benefit of gouernment that vnites together so many and different nations, and that in such peace and outward safety that now they are one helpful to the other and all obey one head. And learne we to be thankfull for gouernment, though it altogether sute not with our desires, knowing that it is better to haue a *Saule* to defend vs from the Philistins then that there should bee no King in Israell that euery one may do what he listeth, and what is wanting in gouernment, learne we to supply by prayer to our God, and more free and conscionable obedience: And seeing policy is no better a band to bind diuers natures together, but at the last they are no better then brethren in euill, embrace we the bond of perfection which proceeds from the feare of God, that so the Lyon and the Lambe may dwell together, yea the Lyon may be so changed into the Lambe that there may be the vnity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Vers. 2. In those daies]. i. when *Abashneroth* had obtained victory ouer his enemies, and therevpon *sat in his throne.*].
that

that is inioyed outward peace and was drowned in security, then gaue he his mind to feasting, and so made way for new troubles. As if the spirit would hereby shew vnto vs how the wicked doe vse their prosperitie: namely they passe and spend it all in excesse and abuse of Gods blessings. A thing they must needs fall into, if wee consider either the end why God bestowes prosperitie vpon them, namely to sat them vp to the day of slaughter, or their desire of prosperitie, which is onely for the maintenance of the flesh, or lastly their secret feare that doth assault them for the change therof, and therefore they will take their full of it while it lasteth, wherby they become executioners of Gods purpose against them-selues. Hereby we learne, as not to measure mens happynesse by prosperitie, but by the right vse of it; so seeing it is so apt to be abused, feare wee rather this condition then greedily desire it, and seeing there is beauty in heauen which cannot bee corrupted nor taken away; looke we with *Moyse* to the recompence of that reward, and so choose we rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, then to inioy the pleasures of sin for a season.

[*When King Ahashuerash fate*] i. was quiet and secure &c. Behold how the fruite and peace of prosperitie in the wicked, namely they sitte at ease & are drowned in security, so was the world when the church was in affliction, so was *Lasb* when euill was neere them: And surely no maruaile if the prosperitie of the wicked make them secure, seeing their hearts are set on it, so they dreame of no other happynesse, and so by Gods iustice are hereby prepared to their destruction. Hee that is wise shall vnderstand those thinges, and to whome the Arme of the Lord shall reueale them, hee will not sette his heart on such shadowes which may so grossely bewitch him, but rather feare him-selſe in prosperitie to preuent securitie: he will see in the securitie of a state the imminent charge of its prosperitie. And so seeing the plague will hide him-selſe: and seeing all earthly happynesse carryes it bane with it. Hee

7 *Obſ.* Wicked do abuse their prosperitie to the maintenance of the flesh.

^a 7. *Doctr.*

1
Jerem. 12. 13.

2
Psal. 73.

1

2

3

Heb. II.

4

8. *Obſ.* Prosperitie breeds security in the wicked.
Zach.
Lud. 18.

1 Thess. 5 3.

1

2
1 Thess. 22.
Ludg. 2. 17.

3

4

1 Pet. 2. 12

4

Jerem. 45.

Oſer.

God tranſlates
Kingdomes
and remoueth
their neſt;

Eſa. 47

1

2

3

Eſay 4. 5

1 Pet. 1

2 Cor. 3.

Why this
feſt was or-
dained,

2

Oſer. 10.
Feaſting law-
full.
Reasons.

Exod. 23.

Leuit. 23.

2

1

will ſecure himſelfe of heauen by beeing a ſtranger on the earth and content himſelfe with *Barnub* that hee hath his life for a prey.

Which was at Suſan] 1. Loe here the *Persian* hauing ſpoyled and brought to ruine the *Aſſyrian Monarchie*, tranſlates the Imperiall ſtate from *Babylon*, to *Suſis*, in *Persia*. Which whether he did it for his greater ſecurity, as truſting his owne nation rather then ſtrangers, or becauſe hee would haue all the glorie and profit redound'd to his owne countrimen. Yet here wee ſee both *the power of God* in changing of Kingdomes, as alſo the truth of Gods threatning againſt *Babell*, that it ſhould bee deſolated, and *Laſty the vicſſitude of proſperity*, euen in the moſt happieſt; *Babylon* was, and *Suſan* is, now *Suſan* was and what is *permanent*.

Vſe 1. And therefore who would ſet his heart vpon that which hath wings, and ſlieth away ſo ſwiftly, rather reſt wee on Gods word, that the glory of fleſh is but as the flower of the field, and *wee daylie changed* by it from glorie to glorie, that ſo wee may liue for euer in glory.

3. Verſ. *The third yeare hee made a Feaſt.*] 1. The third yeare of his raigne after in the the former yeare hee had reclaimed the *Egyptians*, which had reuolted now beeing in peace, both to *gloriſie his armie* for the former victory, alſo to *enſlame his warior*s, to a new expedition; hee ſolemnizeth this royall feaſt.

A thing in it ſelfe indifferent,] and in the right vſe, *lawfull*: that as ſouldiers after long trauaile ſhould haue ſome reſreſhing, and that by the bounty of the Prince they ſhould bee fraſted together in a more liberall vſe of the creatures of GOD: ſo *euen Chriſtians alſo may* bee enlarged herein: *As beeing both the ordinance of GOD himſelfe in the ceremoniall law*, the equity whereof continueth to the worlds end: *Hauing cauſes and occasions* faulſing out in the whole courſe of life: as *thanking*, *ſociety* &c. Hauing an appointed time ſet downe

downe by the spirit of GOD, and lastlie warranted by that *Ecclesi. 3.3*
Christian liberty, which is restored vnto vs in Christ Iesus, *1 Cor. 3. 23*
 and by vertue thereof practized by the *Saints*, both before, *4*
 and since the comming of our Lord Iesus, *Gene. 21*

Vse. And therefore as wee may not either precisely with
 the *Anabaptist*, deny our selues wholly this liberty, or
 with the *superstitious Papist*, deminish and depraue the
 same; by making difference of meates: so we must bee care-
 full, that libertie like, we abuse not this holie libertie as an
 occasion to the flesh; but herein serue one another in a most
 holie loue.

This wee shall doe if wee keepe our selues within these
 bounds in the vse of this liberty: whereby wee shall truly
 examine, this feast of *Ahasuerosh*.

First wee must consider the persons that may feast, not
 euery one, because euery one hath not where-with-all, no
 not euery one that hath: because many haue which haue
 no right therein, neither know how to vse the blessings
 of GOD. But hee onely may lawfully feast, vnto
 whom as the LORD hath bestowed a larger portion in
 his generall prouidence, that so hee may haue where-
 with to take his libertie, so hee finds this portion sanctified
 vnto him by the speciall prouidence and loue of GOD
 in Christ Iesus, that so hee may vse this liberty aright.

Vse. And this as it condemneth all Popish and Heathe-
 nish feasting, vnto whom beeing impure, all things are im-
 pure: so also by the same rule is this feast of *Ahasuerosh*
 in the place 1. condemned.

2. Wee are to way the fit causes of feasting, which the
 spirit of God sets downe to be these.

1. The 1. is the approouing or externall efficient cause,
 vnder GOD which is the *Magistrate*, who onely hath
 power to authorize these publique feasts, and from whom
 the true iustification thereof doth proceed.

2. Is the materiall cause, namely the plentifull pro-
 vision to supply the same. Wherein these rules are to bee
 obserued.

Obser. 11.
 Conditions
 of holy feast-
 ting.
 Who may
 feast
 1 Tit.
 Luk. 16. 12
 1 Tim. 4. 5
 Psalm 14. 8
 1 Tit. 3

Causes of
 feasting.
 Efficient Ma-
 gistrate.
 Nehem. 8.

Materiall
 cause.

Prouision.

The *prouision* must be such as must bee *whole-some* for nourishment 2. *ease of prise* 3. not *farre fet*, when it may bee had neerer hand, as if nothing were good which were not outlandish, and the more cost more worshippinge, 4. *prepared also frugally*, rather to further sobriety, then intice to gluttony.

Formall

cause. 3. Time.

Luk. 16.

Esay. 58. 4.

Rom. 2. 15.

Esa. 5.

For the *forme and manner of the feast*, here must be considered 1. the *time*, which is not euery day but seldome: 2. *not the Saboth*, but on some weeke day. 3. *not when the Church of God is in troubles*, for then we must weepe with them that weepe: 4. *neither many daies together*, as here it was, but *onely some seasonable part of one day*, so that wee may withall, follow both our generall and particular callings By which circumstances this feast of *Abashueras* is condemned, in that it is said to be *An hundred and twenty daies*.

v. rfc. 4.

Guests.

Esay. 5. 8.

Obserue the *fit guests* to a feast, wherein as we are to vse an holy indifferency, in regard that all are of our flesh; so in this differency wee are specially to respect those, that excell in grace and so to haue our tables furnished, with the house-hold of faith: not the *rich* onely, but the *poore* aswell as they, and the *poore not simply*, because they are *poore*; but because they are *poore in spirit*, and receive the Gospel.

Gal 6: 10.

Mat. 5.

Mat. 11.

Sauce.

See we provide good *sauce* to our feasts: not *idle talking*, and *foolish iesting*, not *slaundering* and *reuilng*, nor *amorous dalliance*, but our speech must be *seasoned with sault*, that so it may season our feasting. To this end as it is fit to *sanctifie the feast by prayer and the word*, so to preuent vaine speeches, *intermediate holy conference* is most fit and necessary, or else some quick and sauory questions; and lastly the strength thereof is to be returned vnto GOD, in thankesgiuing: If any thinke that *musicke is not an vnseemely companion* of state feasts, surely as I gaine-say it not altogether in them; so would I with great wisdom to be vsed therein both 1. for the *makers* of the musicke,

1 Tim 4. 5.

Mat. 14. 15.

Iudg. 14.

Musicke how

lawfull at feasts

that

that they be not of the ordinary mummeries, in that kind and 2 for the manner of the musicke; that it be grane and reuerent: as also for the vse, that it bee rather onely to shew that I haue liberty therein, then to venter on a more liberall vse thereof, lest it tend to the satisfiing of the flesh.

Steward and Attendants.

Better attendance without exception, are frugality, and sobriety: the former teacheth vs not to make spoyle or riot (as the minde is) but to husband well the feast, and to gather up the residue that none be lost: the latter, instructeth vs to keepe our right in the creature, not to make them our maisters, by surfeiting and drunkenesse, but so to rise from feasting as that we may be fit for prayer, or any other duty of our callings whatsoeuer, neither of which because they were kept in this Kingly feast, but all to the contrary; therefore is this feast also condemned from the manner thereof. Onely one thing is here specially obserued by the holy ghost. Namely that the drinking was by an order none might compell, but euery one was left to his liberty, to take what hee pleased, which though it be no simple approbation of the feast, because it was rather a qualifying of that euill custome in ciuility which then it seemes was in vse, namely to compell men to drinke by measure, then an holy rule to prouide for sobriety: whereas indeed their should rather haue beene an order to haue stinted that liberty, to which euery one was left, whereby they were apt enough to exceed, though they were not compelled by others, (such glorious sonnes are the vertues of the wicked) yet shall this shadow of vertue proceeding either from the light of nature or from common ciuility, be a swift witnesse against our abhominable custome in this kind: where the grace of our feasting, is thus to be compelled, where not to lie vnder the table, is counted disloyaltie; and cruelty against a mans soule, is esteemed the greatest curtesie.

Frugality Sobriety

Ciuility

verse 8

linall causes *Now touching also the end of feasting, they are these i*
 and ends of *the glory of God, not the setting out of our owne magni-*
 feasting. *ficencie, our ostentation of, Our riches and glorie as is the-*
 1 Cor, 10.31. *manner of rich mens feasts, for which also this feast vnder-*
goes the censure: neither for suspition, as if there were
more holynesse in these festiuities. A fearefull brand vpon
Popish feasts.

2 *A second end is thankfulnessse vnto God for his mer-*
cies, which we doe vsually expresse by the more liberall
vse of the creatures, there-by intending to shew our mercy
towards others: and herein this feast was faultie.

3 *A third end, is continuance of loue and amitie among*
Christians, not that our tables should be snares to intrap
 Abac, 2. *our brother, that wee may see his nakednesse, or strippe*
him of his clothes; not by inflammation of the creature, to
bee enraged one against another as here it fell out in this
prophane feast.

4 *A Fourth end, is to shew our Christian libertie, in the*
 Esay, 25. *bountifull vse of Gods blessing, and so to resemble vnto*
 5 *vs that feast of satisfying, in the Kingdome of hea-*
uen.

6 *And lastly the releenuing of the poore hath heere its place:*
for whome wee are especially stewards in what is over-
plus. A shadow whereof though wee finde in this
feast; in that it is saide: The King made a feast to the
people; yet was this no true charitie, because without
faith, and indeed rather to shew his pompe, and gratefie
the people, that they might bee more willing afterward
to drudge for him, then of any conscience to comfort
and refresh them: Especially if wee consider, that as
the people generally pay for this excesse, and so were re-
quited but with a feather for a goose (as we say in the pro-
uerb) so only the people of Susa were feasted by the King,
whereas those of the Prouinces had their teeth cleane y-
nough: wherto if we shal adde, that to Cittizens, feasting is
not dainty, & is rare among y country people because nei-
ther their leisure, nor meanes will afford the same we shall
 finde

find y this feasting of the *Susians* was rather a iustifying of that wherein they were too much faultie alreadie, then any true reliefe of their wants or gratification of their paines.

Whence we may obserue .i. how to determine of their actions, who are without God in Christ Iesus: *Namely* *Obs 12* *Virtues of the Hea-*
that they (as them-selues acknowledge) are but shadowes of then, *Splendida pec-*
vertues . and deceitfull sinnes , vnder pretence of libertie, *cata simula-*
satisfying our inordinate lusts. Whereby wee becomme *ebra virtutū.*
flaues vnto Gods blessings, when wee would shew our power ouer them.

I Vse. Wherby wee are taught, as to condemne nature, and the glorious shewes therof, because it greatest liberty is the most dangerous snare: *So to seeke for our most glorious libertie in Christ; who being once ours, all is ours al-* *2*
so: wherby hauing a right in these blessings, we shal haue also grace to vse them well, that so we may lay vp a good foundation against the day of account. *1 Cor, 3.*
1 Tim, 6.

We haue heere a lively Image of the prophane courtly life, and so consequently of the world it selfe. All for the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life: no- *13 Obs, State of the court & world.*
thing for the soule or for the happinesse of the same.

I Vse. Wherein we may see the notable pollicy of Satists, that as they are in place aboue other; so wanting indeed true vertue, wherby they may be manifested to the harts of their people, and to procure and hold them in loue and obedience; Yet in these outward thinges at least they will be singuler and exceed; which being that which most do hunt after and admire; therefore by these they rather desire to obtaine an outward admiration and sayre reuerence of the most, then by true vertue to be loued of the best: Which as it is a deepe mystery of their highest wisdom, to couler their inward villanies, so may we herein obserue the admirable iustice of God, in taking these wise- *1 Iohn, 2. 16. Obs. 14 Polli- cy of worldly greatnes con- founded.*
men in their craftinesse, and thereby making way for their destruction, that their excessiue pompe, breeding secret enuy, while it is flattered with outward applause, and fayned deuotions, doth therby nourish discontent, and so dislike of
their

their persons: and this discontent being intraged, by *imposing new burthens* (which are vsually the effects of princes vaine expences) breake out often into treasons, and subuersions of their greatnesse.

Rom, 12.

15 Princes are
not vnnecessa-
rily to burthen
their subiects.
4th se.

prouer, 22.

Which though it bee no iust cause for such outrage in subiects, because vengeance is mine (saith the Lord) and they are not their owne, yet may great Potentates heere learne not vnprofitably this lesson, *Not vnneccessarily to oppresse their subiects by such superfluous pompe and vanitie*: Because howsoeuer the subiect may and must beare, yea till his backe cracke againe, *Yet his patient bearing shall moue the Lord to ialousie*, who being a helper of the oppressed, and abaser of the mightiest, will heare the cry of the poore that are thus wilfully oppressed, and vnloose euen the choller of Kinges to the deliuerance of his seruants.

16 Princes to
labour special-
ly for inward
glory.

And seeing that earthly greatnesse is an image of the heauenly, as proceeding from thence, and a gracious meanes therto: therefore are earthly Princes taught heere another lesson, *Namely to labour especially for inward glory*: Whereby as they shall *sanctifie*, and so *quallesie*, all their outward greatnesse, to *secure* it from danger, and make it *lesse burthensome*; so, for the fauor of their good oymments shall their subiects *truly loue them*: By which coniunction of spirits, all things shall be easie, *suspitions shall cease from superior*; and *griuances from beneath*: and both Prince and people, shall happily goe vp together to builde the house of GOD, when the Magistrate by example shall lead them the way: Thus by this sweete harmony shall heauen bee vpon earth in an heauenly conuersation, that earth may rest in heauen for euermore.

17 Like prince
like people.

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The contrary whereof is most apparant in this president: *Here is a prophane and luxurious King: and here are like subiects* .i. because we are both apt rather to liue by examples then by lawes, and indeed it is not safe to crosse euen bad examples: As beeing the maine streame of the

the worlde to maintaine sinne, and who shall without danger striue against the streame.

† *Vse.* By how much ought Princes to be more carefull of an holy conuersation, as beeing not onely vnder God, vnto whome they fall (and it is a fearefull thing to fall into the handes of the liuing God) how-soeuer they may stand and beare it out before men: *but in this also that they are sette ouer men; beeing examples of their vices, they thereby are markes of their mallice, so that brethren in euil, shall be brethren in punishment. Yet the greater sinner the greater torments.*

And seeing God sends wicked Princes for the sinnes of a people: Let men be angry with their sinnes, and not with God or his ordinance, by their cheereful obedience, witnessing their true repentance: so shal they either be able to beare the yoke; though it be as heauy as Rehobohams scorpions, or according to their abilitie, the yoke shall be bridled, or in due time, taken of their shoulders.

As for those that inioy the blessing of good government: Let them be thankfull vnto God, in acknowledging their owne vnworthynesse, and let them vse this great blessing in feare and reuerence: taking this oportunitie to build vp Gods house, and mourning with those that are making of bricke; and toying in the mines: not setting up their rest, as if this were all their happynesse; nor flattering such golden times, as that there may not be better: but still forgetting that which is behinde, in steed of that which is before. Yea esteeming all as dung, in comparision of Christ Iesus; refusing with Moses to bee counted the sonne of Pharoes daughter, as hauing respect to the recompence of the reward,

Thus may we truly iudge of feasting: And hereby also iudge this feast of *Ahasuerus*, to bee prophane and superstitious.

Some-what may here be pretended *injustifiable in ciuilitie*, as fit for the state and magnificence of so mighty a Monarch: in that it is said, *it was done according to the power of the King.* Wherein howsoeuer the spirit of God doth graunt

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Wicked Princes sent for the sins of the people.

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Nehemi. 2. 4.

Heb. 11. v. 25.

Verse, 5.

Verse, 7.

19 Princes not
to shew their
magnificence
in belly cheer.

Luke, 16.

Verse, 9. The
Queene *Vashti*
made a
feast also for
women.

20 Dancning
of men and
women vn-
lawfull.

21 God pu-
nisseth finnes
vnl. sinne.
Verse, 9.
1 Iam, 25.
Prou. 23.
3 Phil, 10.

22 Drunken-
nes the effect
of feasting.
Prouer, 21.

graunt a proportion of the feast to the power of the King, yet doth he not at all iustifie this superfluous proportion, as if it were fit for Princes to shew their power to the utmost in such vaine and excessive expences, but rather Ironically taxeth this ostentation of power in such vnecessary occasions, which rather should haue bene extended in more necessary matter for the glory of God, and publike good of the common-wealth: and yet if any commendation be picked out here, it is only such as the Lord commended the *vn-just steward*, which being only good after the opinion of *ŷ* world, for a misconceiued wisdom, was thereby a greater condemnation of folly in the court of conscience.

† This the spirit doth liuely set out vnto vs, by the *enent* thereof, Namely the breach betwene the King and his wife: then which their could be no more fearefull cument, both to declare the vnlawfulnesse of the feast, as also to punish the King for his intemperancy therein.

The occasion to this breach is set downe in the ninth Verse. Namely a shewe of modestie, in the Queene, who refrained from the company of the King, and his Princes, at this great sollemnitie. Which whether it were of pride, because she would keep state by her selfe: or of necessitie, because either the custome of the country, or the Kings Iealousie would not allow her presēce among so many of *ŷ* other sex: Yet surely this may condemne our most lasciuious mingling of both sexes together in dancing and such like meetings, howsoeuer it cannot excuse her for her after disobedience.

And now behold the iustice of God, in beating the wicked with their owne rod, King *Ahasueros* makes a feast and while hee sinnes with excessse, he is punished by the same; hee lookes vpon the wine in the cuppe, and tarries long at it, and loe saith the spirit vpon the seauenth day hee is merry with wine (that is according to the phras, he is bitten with it.) A most righteous hand of God vpon vain-glorious persons, that as they make their belly their God, so their glorie should be their scowme: The King is disgraced by his feast which

which he made so much for his honour. *His wine became a mocker, and strong drunke rageth.*

A most vsuall effect of prophane feasting is bite with drunkennesse, whereby we are often prouoked to bite and deuoure each other.

And not vnlkely to fall out if we consider, that oportunitie and meanes are (to the best) inticements to allure; but to the wicked *cart-ropes*, to hale on sinne. If we obserue the policie of Sathan, who hath so peruerued the naturall iudgement, as in all things, so especially in *indifferent*, that the abuse goes currant for the right vse thereof, and not to bee drunke at feasting, is not to feast aright.

Especially, if we obserue the iustice of God, in punishing sin with sinne, prophane feasting, with filthy vomitings: And herein most eminent, that whereas such feasting is intended for the shew of our greatnesse, and glory of our magnificence, our wisdom is herein mightily confounded, in that our glory becomes our shame.

Wherein we may learne, as, to condemne this sinne in other, especially at such times when it hath such fauourable construction, and allowance, as being the time to shew our greater zeale and courage against the same: so when we are feast-makers, to giue wholesome lawes of temperance, not removing only the apparant abuse, that men should be compelled: But rather *stinting men*, as King Edger did, that they exceede not health and sobrietie: Whereby wee shall not onely keepe peace in the conscience, and of the table to; but cutte of all hope, to bee insured in this sin (a matter especially aimed at by the drunkards at these times, to bring other into y^e same excess with them) And further also, putting drunkards to confusion, in y^e wee will not exceed with them, we shal happily (by Gods mercy) bring them to repentance; and so in time, both ease the Land of this crying sin, & likewise of the iudgments due herto; and also continue y^e wine and oile and such other good blessings, y^e for our abuse of them in this excess is begun, and further threatned, to be taken away from vs.

Thus

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Polidor.

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Isel, 1.

Thus you see the occasion of drunkennesse, the best vse likely that prophane men make of all feastings. Now let vs further consider the sinne it selfe, it is here said : *He was merry with wine.*

In which phrased of speech, the Spirit of God, as he doth set out an effect of large drinking, namely to make men merry, so withall he doth *ironically discover the cloake*, which the world casts ouer this sinne, to couer its shame : Namely, *(to call drunkennesse mirth)* because some mirth is lawfull; therefore the worlde concludes it is good to bee merry, and so consequently not euill to be drunke.

A thing not vsuall to the holy Ghost to speake *Ironically* after the opinion of the flesh, both to discouer the desperate blindness of the wicked, in cloaking vices with the shewes of vertue : as also prophetically to publish Gods righteous sentence against rebellious sinners, namely that they shall be giuen vp to this reprobate sence, as to further and approue very grosse impieties, that so not feeling the sinne, they may follow it still : and so hauing made vp the measure of their sinne, that now lastly they may be prepared to their finall condemnation; the spirit of God in these *Ironically* confessions, *proceedes spiritually* to execute this vengeance : herby setting such a marke of prooffe vpon them as shall make them vtterly without excuse, as implying thereby that they hate to be reformed, and yet thereby also harden them in their sinne : And therefore let no man reprove, but let drunkennesse be counted mirth, and euill be taken for good. Reioyce oh young-man, and take thy pleasure : *Let him that is filthy be filthy still.* Wherby not onely the word becomes a *stumbling block* to harden them in their sinne; But, because they will not obey the truth, therefore shall the Lord giue them vp to beleene lies : Behold saith the Lord there shall be like Priest, like people, to preach of wine and strong drinke vnto them, deluding vnsutable soules, that drunkennesse is mirth, and to be merry is good : And I the Lord haue sent such Prophets : Yea I haue sent him, and hee shall preuaile, the fools shall make a sport of sinne, and they shall

23. The vse of
holy Ironies
in the word.

Reuel. 12.
Esay. 9. 11.

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Prouer. 23

4
note.

Ose. 4.

Esay. 5.

Eccle. 11.

Reuel. 12.

1 Thess. 2. 12.

2 Mich.

Ezech. 14.

Prou. 11.

shall thinke they doe God good service, that performe vilest parts against his deereſt ſeruants. Ioh. 16. 2

Uſes. And doth the world count good euill, and euill good? doth the word to this purpoſe ſpeake often in the worlds language? Oh then what meruaile is it if the word be a *ſtumbling block* to the world? what need had wee of eye-ſalue, to *diſcerne this difference*. When the ſpirit ſpeaketh according to it one verity, and when hee expreſſeth our vanitie, how ought wee to *maintaine the true light of conſcience*? Certainly howſoeuer the ſpirit may ſpeake fairely of ſinne, as therein expreſſing what the world would haue deemed, *Yet the conſcience hereby will not excuſe for ſinne*. And though falſe teachers may cunningly dawbe vp the ſame, yet the *gaine-ſaying conſcience will diſcouer the vntempered mortar*. The beſt approbation of him, ſhall be that he is a flatterer, and the beſt comfort to the conſcience, that hee is but a miſerable comforter: Nay to adde further the ſhame of this dawbing: *euen the world it ſelfe ſhall diſcouer it owne blindneſſe*, and though all ſhould bee ſilent, euen the ſinne it ſelfe will ſpeake, that ſuch mirth is drunkenneſſe, and ſuch good is euill.

Hearken I pray you to the circumſtances of the Text: *Obſ. 24.*
Vpon the ſeauenth day. The King (it appeares) ſat well by *Markes of*
 it, and therefore, if *they that tarie but one day*, will bee en- *drunkenneſſe*
 flamed with the wine, we muſt not imagine, but the King *Eſay 5*
 had his burden: You will ſay, *hee was of a ſtrong conſtitution*. *Obiect.*
 on, and being alſo accuſtomed thereto, was better able to *Eſay 5*
 beare it: Yet there is a woe to them, that are *ſtrong to*
drinke wine, and the more ſtrength herein, the greater *Anſ.*
 ſinne: becauſe it is an occaſion to *draw others* into the ſame
 exceſſe with vs. *But you will ſay*, this King was carefull to *Obiect.*
 prevent this ſinne, in others, becauſe hee made an order,
 that none ſhould bee compelled, and therefore not likely *Anſ.*
 to be guilty thereof. As if ſo bee prophane Kings are not
 exempted from their lawes, and by their examples allow
 that, which their law condemneth. If you ſay, he might be *Obiect.*
 merry with wine, and yet not bee drunke. I would thinke *Anſ.*

so to, if I knew not there were *degrees in drunkenesse*, among the which though some may extenuate the same in the eye of the world, yet they do truly agrauate the same by the effects thereof. For had it not beene better for this Wine-bibber to haue bin *beastly* or *dead-drunke* (as we say) not able to haue spoken, or known any thing, then so to be merry-drunke as to be mad with reason. For what greater madnesse could there bee, then to call for his Queene to make shew of her beauty to such a whittled cōpan^y, whose *heads being ful of wine their eyes must needs be ful of adulerie*, and so for the satysfying of their lusts, might haue had their *hands ful of blood*, and not vnlikely to haue indangered the life of y^e King him-selfe? And was not wine a mocker & strong drink raging? When for so smal an offence, as not to come at such an vnseasonable an occasion, this beautifull spouse was vtterly *repudiate*, and so his merry draughts de- priues him of the chiefe meanes of his contentment: if you say this was done, not without respect of his estate, because *he sent (seauen of his chiefe Princes)* for the Queenes more honourable conuoy: and therefore it may seeme hee knew what he did, and kept *decorum* herein; Surely (I take it) this rather bewraies the strength of his intemperancie, who being not inflamed with wine, was therby so impotently enraged with lusts, that he must needs (presently) feed his eie at least with the obiect thereof. Out of w^{ch} we may obserue, *the best vse that prophāe great ones, make of their wines, which is to pranke them vp that they may be baits of lusts to others, (the people and Princes must see her beauty)* to vse them at their pleasure for the satysfying of their lusts, heres no sepe- ration with consent, to the contentmēt of both; for y^e king hath his change, & the poore Queene must be defrauded, she must stand at reuersion & come when he sends for hir, and he wil not send but to satiffie his lust, her desire must be subiect to his lust; but he wil not giue hir due beneuo- lēce, she must come to be seen to feed y^e eie with lust, when happily ther was no strength to yeeld nature his due, or if there were strength, yet y^e strange woman should haue it.

Thus

Obiect.

Ans.

Obs. 24.

Prophane
persons abuse
their wines to
be only baits
of lust. V. 11.
1 Cor. 7.

Thus wiues are kept fasting, to be lookt vpon as babies, when harlots depriue them of the crown of marriage: Thus marriage is dishonoured, and sin hereby ripened, and the wicked many times beaten by their owne rod: their babies oftentimes, make them beasts, and so paie their debts. These ordinary harmes may proue excellent instructions both in the *choyce of our wiues*, and in the *use of them*.

Of. 26. of the
choyce of
wiues how.

That wee choose not onely for *beauty*, as being a broker to lust, and haruinger to shame, and at the best cannot last out our loues; Neither *make riches our marke*, which is in this case no better then fuell to sinne, but that our principall aime in the choyce of a wife be *the feare of God*, baited with the other meanes, *Not matching with Poperie*, in hope to conuert, but fearing rather, that it will peruert vs, *neither refusing religion*, simply without the other complements: *but respecting wisely some equalltie of age*, least wee bee vnfitte for marriage duties, when they are most required at our handes, and *especially proposing the inward beuty*, together with it not reiecting the outward.

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Those hauing chose aright, wee must further learn *how to use them*: y so they may be truly helpers vnto vs: and this is performed 1. *by performing our duty to the* and 2. *by teaching them, and exacting of them the performance of their duties.*

How to be
well used.

The point of our duty, is to *gouerne them in the Lord*, as to dwell with them *louingly*, and so to auoid all vnneccessary occasion of absence, either from bed or boord. (A thing w^{ch} the Law very gratiouly provided for, that at the least the first yeare there should not be seperation, though the affaires of the common-wealth did necessarily require it) that the *gadding of the wife*, may bee also *preuented*: a thing that may bring her within danger of catching, & so hereby *loue* might be happily *confirmed by wife experience* in each others natures.

He is to giue good example, to preuent much schooling: and he must *strengthen his example, with wise counsell* out of the word, least he bee counted singular, and the more confirmed, not only to *auoid the euill*, which she is subiect vnto

but to lead her forward in the waies of grace, using counsell freely but reproofing warilie, (and commending wisely) not for euery light matter, vnlesse it bee iustified, neither before company, vnlesse they giue strength to sinne, but in much wisdom, and meekenesse, by the euidence of the spirit.

3. *Due benenolence*, must also bee afforded, the husband, *must bring in*, and prouide cheerefully, for her maintenance; but *within his cauling*, and to further in grace, allowing recreation. but what may further repentance, and employing her wisely wherevnto she is most fitted, by the gifts of minde, and ability of her bodie: so as to keepe her from Idlenesse, and yet not to discourage her: easing him-selfe thereby of such laboures: that so hee may more freely follow his owne calling, and honouring his wife by that confidence in her.

The duties that wee must treach and exact of our wiues is, that she reuerence vs in heart, and stand in an holy aw of the husband, as being her head vnder Iesus Christ. This she shall shew 1. *By meekenesse in behauiour*, and 2. *Lowliness in speech* 3. auoyding both grosse and soure words 4. And yet not sparing, to a wife; yea, meekly to reprove, quiting her selfe, in mutuall loue, yea reioycing her soule, that she hath so good a steward and protector.

2. We must procure *obedience from them*, euen as Christ was obaied of his Church in all things, that is in all lawfull for Christ would command no other, and that willingly, and cheerefully, though it crosse priuate corruption. Thus may we rightly vse wiues. But as for *Abusueros* his vse is for lust; and lust is impatient.

And therefore, that we may see sinne wants not wit, for the speedy effecting thereof, behold he sends an effectuall message, that in his opinion could receiue no repulse, so hot was he vpon it, so wise to do quill.

And had hee no better imployment for his counsellors, then to send them on such a message; which neither seemed his wisdom, nor their grauity? could all his fulnesse, and attendance serue him for no better vse.

Obs. 27.
The wicked abuse
Gods blessings to their
condemnation.

Oh

Oh how like is hee to all those happy children by nature who thinke the blessings of GOD are giuen them to satisfie their lustes, and so to be furtherances to their condemnation. i. *But* I would the children of the Kingdome, were not guiltie of this sinne, vnto whome GOD giues these blessings to prouoke and further them in his seruice? That they were not hindered in the seruice of GOD by them? That they were not occasions to plunge them deeper in the worlde? that *Demas* did not imbrace the world, and *Diotrephes* loue preferment? Surely if Natures fooles, shall not teach wisdom by their experience; yet our profession might lesen vs to imbrace the time of visitation, and to vse our aduantages for our best furtherance to heauen: *To whome much is giuen, much shall bee required at their handes*; and the greater blessings abused the greater torments; not onely stored vp against the day of vengeance, but many times in this life inflicted vpon them: As may appeare in the case of the Queene, whose beauty is the occasion of her so great misery.

Wherein we may behold the use and end of Gods blessings in the wicked, as they are giuen of GOD to fatten vp the wicked: so for the execution thereof, they are abused to sinne, and thereby worke out shame. Their tables are their snares, and their riches a pitte to drowne them in, their wisdom is their halter, and their honour turnes them forth as beasts; their craftinesse intrappes them, and their friends confound them, Yea the wife that lies in the bosome, shall pronounce sentence against them.

By which wee may learne: As not to enuy their prosperitie, so, not to desire their full cuppes, but rather to feare this exceeding, and be contented with a meane estate. But if the Lord shall cast a larger portion vpon vs, wee must not sette our heartes vpon it, neither be puffed vp with the same, neither abuse them to sinne, but to make them weapons against the same. And that, by sanctifying them vnto vs by the word and prayer, and that remiuing this sanctifi-

1 Vse.

2

Obf. 18

The blessings of the wicked proue their scourges in this life.

Plal, 69.

2 Sam, 14.

1 Im, 6.

Dan, 4.

1 Cor, 3.

Hell, 6.

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cation, vppon their particuler vse, onely to *employ* them holylic to GODS glory, *soberly* for our owne vse, and *cheerefully* for the benefit of our poore neighbours, that so we may lay vp a good foundation by them against the day of Iesus Christ.

29 Obs. Courtiers Slaves to their Princes lusts.

But would these Counsellors and cheefe Princes, bee sent so vnseasonably on such a message? *Ought they not rather, to haue aduised,* their Lord, of the vnfitnesse and danger thereof; and so haue saued them-selues that labour, and their Maister that shame? Surely whatsoeuer might bee the cause of this their speed, whether they *ennied the Queene*, and so sought occasion against her, or, *were in the Kings predicament*, and therefore desired fuell to their fire.

Yet here wee may truly obserue the fearefull condition of Godlesse Courtiers: *Slaves they must bee if they will liue there*, and *slaves they will be*, to choose, so they may dance in golden tethers: *So corrupt are such Courts* to admit no other seruants, *so base is our nature*, to make choyce of no better Maisters: *so strong a thing is loue*, that refuseth no abiect paynes, *so iust is the Lord*, in fitting wicked Princes thus according to their desires; that so they may bee fitted for his purpose for their iust confusions.

2

1 Vse. *Or pray therefore* for good Princes that they may commaund in GOD: that so glory bee giuen vnto him: there may bee peace among men. *And pray againe I say for constancy*, and holy resolution, that so thou maist obey GOD rather then man: seeing hee, that *thus looseth his life shall saue it*, and hee that saueith it shall loose it.

There is no seruice to the seruice of a King, if still wee preferre the King of Kinges: winning or loosing we shall be Kings.

30 Obs. The Courtly life how to be accepted & vied. Ioseph Gencl. 41. Dan. 4. 5.

Concerning the prophane Courtly life, as thou seest hereby, thou hast little cause to desire it, so if thou beest called refuse it not.

Ioseph was a Courtier, and yet remained the childe of God: *Daniell* a States-man, and yet faithfull with his God;

God : onely remember thou which wouldst serue the Prince , what suiters and seruants will now haunt thee? Attendants
on the Court.
 Looko to bee *ennied*, if thou dost excell, and prepare thy selfe to *slaunders*, though thou dost neuer so well; Nay looko for *secret trechery*, to hoysc thee on the suddaine; and make account of *grosse flattery*, to make thee secure; here *ambition* will not faile to breed in thee *discontent*; and *lust* will bee importunate to discouer the same, *pompe* will here intice thee to *forget thy God*, and shewes will inueagle thee to loose the *substance*; *examples* wil allure thee to committe sinne with credite; and *priuiledge* will warrant securitie therein: *Glustony* will assault thee, to make thy belly thy God; and *drunkennesse* will requite thee; thy glory shall be thy shame; *Idlennesse* will wooe thee, to bring thee out of fauor: and *company* will presse thee to frame thy selfe to custome: *pride* will exhalt thee, that thy fall may bee the greater, *And Prophaneesse*, will make sure, that thou shalt not rise agayne: In a worde as the Courte is a true *Epitome* of the worlde, so in this little worlde looko for a worlde of daungers: And therefore thou hadst neede to stand vppon thy Gard.

Keepe thy heart therefore fast lockt with the feare of GOD; so shalt thou not feare what man can doe against thee: And open it *dayly*, by hearty prayer that God may more inlarge it: *Lette thy carriage bee humble*, without base assentation, and yet *secure* to preuent allurements: *Bee diligent in thine affaires*, that thou maist stand before Princes, and yet *patient of preferment*, least thou shew thy selfe an hyreling. *Thinke no euill of thy Prince*, in thy heart, leaste thy GOD condemne thee, and sette a watch before thy tongue, that it betraye thee not: *Make a conenant with thine eyes*, that beautie doe not deceiue thee, and put thy knife to thy throate least thou surfeit of excelle: *Hearc no tales willingly*, much lesse beleene them, and bee not prying into the estates of others, least thou be quined with vltury.

31 Old Rules
for behaviour
in Court.

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15 *Consort with thy equalls yet such as are of the better sort, but be familiar with few, how soeuer courteous to all, Backe thee with some great one, so his greatnes be in goodnes, and sport thee with such exercises, as are Martiall and profitable, walke still in feare, to keepe thee from falling, And for thy apparrell, fit thy selfe so to the present fashion, as may rather condemne it by carelesse frugality, then iustifie the same with foolish affection, And to giue thee in fine two summary rules for all. Fashion thy whole actions by the word, and not by examples: and prepare for remouall, for here is no biding place for thee: Thus being armed thou maist safely be a courtiar, and that with such successe, that at least, thou shalt *bridle sinne* in others, if thou canst not reforme it; if thou canst doe neither, yet *thou maist weepe in secret for it*, so though thou make others worfe, yet thou shalt be the better, because the more thou seest sinne rainging, the more thou shalt hate it, and seeing the plague thou shalt not onely hide thy selfe: butt either with good Heister, thou shalt be a meanies for the generall good, or at least if the decree be gone forth, with E bodmelech thou shalt haue thy life for a prey.*

Jerem. 13.

Jeremy. 39.

Thus you see out of euill manners, proced good lawes, these bad courtiers haue taught vs how some may bee good.

Well, these Eunuches haue done their message, what answer haue they?

ver. 12.

The holy Ghost resolueth this in the 12. verse. *But the Queene Valtay refused to come*] being sent for by the King, in this time of feasting, from her fit company of women, to an vnruly company of men, and that to no other end then the shew of her beauty, which was like to haue proued a snare to all (*The spirit saith shee refused to come, at the Kings word*). And why did shee refuse to come or was it lawfull for her to refuse?

Surely how soeuer, it might bee pretended that it was not secretly, yet herof. *shee was not now, bur her husband*

husband the Iudge, (the thing in it selfe being not simple euill) though shee were not ignorant that the King was distempered) yet this would haue made obedience more commendable ; and her Lord without excuse, if she had conceiued that this had beene against the Law, yet shee might know the Kings commaund, was a priueledge about the Law, and though shee might plead feare of giuing offence to the King, who by this her comming might nourish ieaousie, Yet this being but supposed, and onely like to follow, was not to hinder a thing to be done. If it shall be graunted, that it was his sinne thus to command her : yet it cannot bee denied, but it was her sinne not to be commanded, Lastly if it shall be alledged that she had sinned in comming, yet it must be also graunted, that she sinned in staying. *Thus comming and staying* commaunding and not obeying (actions in them-selues contrary) yet proceeding from an euill hart, they all do tend to the same end, namely the maintenance of corruption, and dishonor of GOD, so corrupt is nature that it yeelds no good fruit, so deceitfull is sinne to intrappe on all sides. so vnsearchable our corruption to be discerned, so impossible a thing it is to wind out the same.

Againe wee may here learne a duty for husbands towards their wines : they must walke as men of knowledge in the midst of their families, not controuling imperiously, but by good example leading them forward, both, prouiding for, them things honest and conuenient as also giuing them due beneuolence, so handling them tenderly as the weaker vessells.

Thirdly here is a duty of wines towards their husbands that they disobey not their lawfull commands as being subiect vnto them in the Lord.

Well the Queene will not come, what followeth here-vpon. The text saith. *The King is very angry, and his wrath kindled within him.* And no maruile, for as it is counted a part of generosity thus to fret and fume : so prophane Princes do hereby especially keepe state and their variety

Ioseph. lib. 17.
Antiq. cap 6.

Obs. 37.
The instruction
on and con-
fession of the
wicked in their
actions.

Obs. 33.
Husband duties to their
Wines.
1. 1. et. 2. 7.

2
Oberfer.
Wines duties
towards husbands.
P. Pet. 3. 6.
Col. 3. 1.

variety of blessings giues heat vnto their spirits and are as so many bellows to blow the coales, and if *Aba* were more vehemently kindled, the cause is apparent, his wine had enraged him: and his lust vn-satisfied did cast oyle into this fire, and seeing his commandment was also dispised, and that by her who of all should haue obeyed, this must needs set him all on fire, in that his Authority and greatnesse was thus contemned, yea he did well to be angry to iustifie his command.

Obfer. 36.
Anger and
occasions.

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Exod. 32.

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Exod. 14.
Marth. 3.
3

✓ *Ephes.* 4. 26.

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Obfer. 37.
Iudg. 14. 19.
The lawfulness
of anger and
its bounds.
Exod. 16.
1 Cause.

Obferue we here wisely the occasions of anger, that so we may not fall into the like distemper: and *smother we it happily in the first sparkling*, lest it breake out into a fire that cannot be quenched, and see the occasion be *inst and weighty* that may moue vs thereto: For did the King well to be angry at so slight an occasion? Hee had cause to be angry with him-selfe, for his abuse of Gods blessings, and horrible prophaneffe: but to be so angry with his Queene, that she would not come at his call, this rather shewed, that anger was his maister, then that he recouered therein the contempt of his authority. *Moses* did wel to be angry, when the people had committed idolatry, so did not, *Ahashmurosh*, because his wife would not make an Idol of him: *God* did well to be angry, for the neglect of his ordinance: so did not *Ahashmurosh*, for the contempt of his, *Christ* did wel to be angry because the cause was waigh-ty, and he tempered his anger against sinne, with compassion towards the person, so did not this King, the cause was smale, and the measure immoderate: no place left for compassion, no hope of reconciliation. *Let not the sonne go downe upon our wrath*: *Sampson* did well to be angry, to whet his couradge against Gods enemies, so did not our hot-spurre to enflame him-selfe against a silly woman and so to depriue him-selfe of his deereft friend. *In a word to be angry is lawfull*, so we consider, 1. the cause it must not be at good, but at things onely euill, and that properly an euill of sinne, (neither naturall defects nor necessary burthens, must be cause of anger,) but onely sinne and

and that committed with an high hand.

2 Obserue the manner of anger, though their be waigh- a manner
ty cause, yet we must not soeasily giue the bridle to this
passion (for it is the part of a foole to be of an hasty spirit)
but consider our selues, whether wee be now fit for anger
or no, and so accordingly giue way to this passion, and then
it must be tempered both with loue, and commiseration of
the party, and accompanied with patience, and bounded with-
in our callings least we breake out into reuenge. Mar. 3. 9.
2 Cor. 11. 21.
1 Sam. 10.
3 Measure.

3 We must obserue a measure in our anger, it must both
sort with our persons, as lest guilty of that we are offended
in others, and be tempered also according to the signe of the
person, whom hereby we do humble, and it must not one-
ly end with the occasion, but euen preuent the same to the
better reforming thereof, because where it resteth, it is in
the bosome of a foole. Eccl. 7. 11.

4 We must be sure to leuell our anger at a right marke, 4 Obiect.
the sinne we must ayme at, and spare the person, and it must
not be the wrong done to vs, but that which concernes
God that we must be angry at.

5. And lastly the end of our anger must be wisely consi- 5 End,
dered, 1. not our credit or reuenge, but the glory of God.
2. not the hardning of a sinner, but his breaking, and conuer-
sion: Thus if we will be angry we shall not sinne. And here- Eph. 4. 25.
in sinned this King because he was not thus angry.

And therefore it had beene good for him, to haue re-
pressed this causelesse anger, by not giuing way vnto it, or tur-
ning the matter into a iest, by seeing a forehead into the euent,
and considering in what case he was; he might haue wisely
wayed that his wife was no fit obiect of anger, and that she
might haue had cause rather to haue beene commended, he
might haue not beleeued what report the Eunuchs brought,
or if he did beleue them, loue and wisdom would haue
taught him to haue let it in at one care and out at the other.
Thus maist thou preuent vnseasonable anger; Onely
one thing the Holy Ghost addeth, which may seeme

Verse, 13.

to quallifie this sinne. Namely that vpon his anger, hee fell not presently to reuenge, hauing power in his hands, as furious husbands haue done vpon such occasions: but, *Hee saide vnto his wise-men which knew the times*) That is hee takes great aduile, in this small occasion, as if the state of his Kingdome were now in question, wherein (as I take it) he doth *increase his sinne*, not only by this deliberation, *giving way to his anger*, which being now *silent*, was thereby *more seiled*; and so like to doe more hurt: But in that hee calls a Councell, to determine of so light a matter, which might haue beene better decided within the curtaines, mee thinkes vnto his anger hee added extreame follie, disenabling his wisdome, and abasing his state.

Rom, 1.

1 King, 13.

Ioh, 11. 48.

Obs 39. The
cloakes of sin
are occasions
to increase the
same.

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Vse 1.

Ierem, 4. 21.

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Behold here the wisdome of carnall men, *when they seeme to bee wise, they become fooles, the fairer cloake they haue for their actions, the deeper thereby are they plunged in iniquitie*, and so prepare them to their greater destruction: because the ciuill forbearing, and bridling of sinne doth both secretly iustifie the same to their deceiued conscience: *and so furthers* the committing thereof with greedinesse; and securely increasing, and ripening the same, makes way thereby to suddaine destruction: *Whereby wee may learne* aboue al things to take heed of *being wise* to do euill, either blessing our soules *in the outward bridling of sin*, or contenting our selues with *the shewes of vertues*, but rather to become fooles in the full discouery of sinne, that so being cast out of our selues, we may be cast vpon Christ, in whome of fooles, we shall be made wise to God.

See wee heere the vaine employments of the greater
40 Ob. World- Councillors of the world: The best that they do is to satisfie the lusts of their Princes, as whom only they count happy, and by whom only they are happy, and the worst they do is to bandy against God and his Christ, whom as they know not, so his yoaik they will not indure: vain men y are here said to know the times and seasons, and yet were ignorant of the time of their visitation: *Whereby the truly*

ly counsellors
how vainly
employed.

1 Cor, 2 8.

psal. 2 1. 2. 3.

Luke, 12. 56.

truly wise may learne their lesson, that as they must bee skillfull, which shall see the Kings face, and bee principall in his kingdome; so to imploy their speciall skill for the aduancing of Christs kingdome, least *hee count them his enemies that will not let him raigne ouer them*; and hauing first fought the kingdome of heauen, and the righteoufnesse thereof, *as hereby they shall best prouide for the safetie of the Prince, whose crowne sits most sure when it is cast at the feete of Christ*; so they shall finde godlinesse to bee profitable for this life, yea the people hereby shall fare the better; poore and rich shall dwell in safetie; there shall bee no complaining nor leading into captiuitie in our streetes, *yea which is the greatest wisdom*, they shall bee wise to themselues, in settling their slipperie state, and eternising their happinesse. *Happy are the people that are in such a case, yea blessed are the people which haue the Lord for their God.*

3. Obserue we here one marke of the miserie of Courtiers, that as they are brokers to one another in sinne, so they are vsually such as containe each others punishments.

Queene *Valsty* no doubt and these had beene brethren in euill, and so it is their lottes to become her iudges. It being most righteous with God, *to make the instruments of sinne the author of it punishment*, that so it might receiue the greater confusion.

Vle. 1. Whereby wee are taught, as not foolishly to flatter our selues in impunitie, because wee are many partners in sinne: so wisely to auoide fellowship in sinne, and to expect these as our rods, who haue beene our brethren in euill; comforting our selues, with this gracious issue, that though *Isay 10.* *Asour* shall be *Israels* rod, because *Israell* committed fornication with him. Yet when *Israell* shall bee purged, the rod shall be cast into the fire.

These counsellors are here described vnto vs, *i.* by their estate, and outward quality, they were not taken out of the meanest; but from the Princes of the people, so (saith the spirit) *They were the seauen Princes of Persia* men beside their

Obser. 41.
The milery of courtiers that they are contriuers of each others misery.
Reasons 1.

Ezech. 23.

Obfer. 42.
Choyce of
Counsellors
out of the
Nobility.

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Pro. 15. 22.

their wifdome, of greateft birth and ability

A thing very fit, that fuch fhould be Counfellors; both, *i.* becaufe vfuall as they haue *the beft education*, and fo are likeliest to haue moft meanes of wifdome, *fo i.* *that they haue power* to countenance, and execute their counsellors, as well mighty to defend the Kingdome by their purfe and meanes, as to direct by their wifdome; therefore hauing two strings to their bow, they are moft fitteft for this Office, *efpecially* in the choice of thefe, if here we confider that three dangerous enemies to Kingdomes are happily fuppreffed. Not onely *Enny* which cannot faften on thefe, as hauing no benefit, but rather trouble by this calling, but *couetoufneffe* alfo, which here is needlefle, where generous greatneffe comes from inheritance: and laftly *difcontentment* is happilie preuented, if meaner fhould bee aduanced and thefe Princes reiected; *Wherunto if we fhall ad* the praetize of Tyrants, which is to roote out vfuall the true Nobility, and to aduance in their fteed vp-ftartes and vile perfons, wee fhall find the praetize of the good Princes hereby to be more iuftifiable.

Vfe 1. By which, as that *Machiullian* pollicy is vtterly condemned, which aduifes Princes to let none grow great vnder them, much leffe to admit greatneffe about them; *fo* *Chriftian Princes*, are not reftained here their prerogatiue; to aduance euen meane ones for their gifts and deferts: *the beft wifdome*, is to mingle thefe, with others, if there be correfpondency of gifts, that fo both may be humbled, and better fitted to giue aduife, that vertue beeing aduanced may be more thankefull and profitable, and greatneffe being imploied, may bee more faithfull, and leffe dangerous: that the experience of the one, may keepe the others in breath, and the generousneffe of the other may preuent oppreffion and couetoufneffe, that fo *in the multitude of Counsellors* there may be ftedfaftneffe, and *in variety of Iudgements* more wife deliberations.

A fecond defcription of thefe counfellors is from their inward quality: It is faid,

They

They knew the times, and the Law and iudgement. i. that Verse 14.
is, they had experience how to order things fitly to the *Obs. 43.*
times, and that iustly according to law &c. as beeing ac- Counsellors
quainted with the iudged cases thereof. Qualities very ought to be
necessary in those that shalbe Counsellors. As being both sifful in the
the *makers*, and *Iudges* of the lawes, and vpon whose direc- Lawes and
tion the whole state dependeth, which cannot be vphol- customes.
den but by righteousnesse and iudgment.

And surely very profitable would those haue proued to
the aduancement of Gods glory, if they had beene truely
seasoned with the word of God, for want whereof as they
were no better then weapons of the vnrighteous, so they
prooue as golden halters to hang such *Achisobels* withall:

A notable lesson to Christian Princes, that as they are not *Obs. 44.*
to neglect other complements in the choice of their coun- Counsellors
cellors to be about them, as wise experience, and ciuill such as feare
knowledge, and so especially they would single out such as God.
feare the Lord, & aboue al things make conscience of pro-
moting his glory. Which they shal know *by the government* How to dis-
of their families, according to Gods words, *by the promoting* come.
of religion, in the countiees where they dwell: *by their con-*
scionable v sage, and government ouer their Tennants, and
generally by their care to ease the subiect of oppression, and to
giue contentment to their power vnto them: hereby shall
they attaine to perfit wisdom, which without Gods feare
is carnall and diuelish, and such wise men shall defend the *Pro. 29.*
Kingdome, and deliuer the same from all imminent daun-
gers.

Vse 1. Which as it condemneeth, that deuilish position,
which would haue state-men, *only to seeme, and not to be re-*
ligious, thereby instead of religion setting vp Hipocrisie, &
Atheisme. So, in that the prouidence of the LORD worketh
by meanes, and their can be no religion without learning,
and the meanes thereof. Therefore in the second place
this condemneeth their opinion, that thinke learning
is not necessary for the government of Kingdomes, as
making men to know their strength, and so promoting
them

3 them to seditions and such like, as if mother wit or experience,
 4 or traditions onely, would serue the turne : the verie
 ground of Atheisme, (broker to tyranny) *Whereby* Christi-
 an Princes are aduized, to encourage learning, that their
 cheifest affaires may be wisely directed thence. *And seeing*
by this meanes God raiseth vp out of the dust : and setteth the
 poore vpon the seat of Princes : Why should we now bee
 discouraged to imploy our Childeen herein ? Why do we
 rather put them to trades, and so empty the vniuersities ;
 Nay the Churches of GOD ? Is the hand of the LORD
 shortened ? Nay is not his spirit enlarged in these latter
 daies ? doth not Satans greater rage against it iustifie this
 calling ? And is not our GOD stronger to maintaine.
 Where the oppositions are the greater ? certainly how soe-
 uer our learning may not aduance vs to be Councillors to
 earthly Kings yet beeing sanctified by grace, it shall pro-
 mote vs to Heauen, where in steed of Councillors, we shal
 raigne as Kings with Iesus Christ for euermore.

Ioel 2.

It followeth, yet concerning these Councillors, that
(They saw the Kings face). Noting therein an extraordina-
 ry fauor, that was graunted to these Councillors. Namely
 that whereas these *Persian Monarkes* were seldome seene
 of any, vnlesse they held out the golden scepter ; yet these
 had free access into the Kings presence, they might come
 into the presence (as we say) and see the Kings face.

Obs. 45.

Princes
 must not bee
 strang to their
 subiects.

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A very fit thing that Councillors should haue more
 free access to Princes then ordinary men, because they
 are persons of more trust and imployments : And yet, not fit for
 Kings to be strange vnto their subiects, and to count it a mat-
 ter of state, to be rarely seene of them ; *Wherein*, may a King
 better shew his *humility*, then in being affable, and courte-
 ous, euen to the meanest ? *may not his wis'dome*, bee greatly
 seene herein, that to giue contentment to his subiects, that
 desire to see his face, he in this respect shew himselfe more
 open and often, among them ? *and should* it not be as great
 ioy for Kings, to behold the faces of their subiects, in whom
 consists their glory and their safety too ? *And would it not*
 quit

quis cost, for Princes thus to be acquainted with their subjects, to heare some-times their causes in their own persons, and so determine of them? do they not hereby *discharge their callings faithfully*, and *preuent wisely much iniustice*, which otherwise fallles out. Did not *Salomon* and other vertuous Princes heare causes themselves? Did they not *Samuell* ride circuit to do iustice, haue they not had set daies to Edger, such necessary end: and haue they hereby exposed themselves rather to daunger? Haue they taken more vpon them then they could well discharge? Haue they abased their authority, and deprived themselves of their lawfull pleasures? *Nay rather* haue they not, hereby wonne the hearts of their subiects; and so their owne security? hath not their honour beene increased, by faithfull discharge of their calling? And their authority iustified, in beeing examples to their owne lawes? Is not Idleness hereby preuented, the very bane of Kingdomes, and true contentment gained, in stablishing sound peace and equitie? And ought not this to be the chiefeest pleasure of Princes, to procure their true content, in giuing glory to God by faithfull execution of their callings? Neither let them feare to be oppressed with the waight of this burthen, and therefore it must follow they must put it off altogether. *Moses* his president will be a middle rule in this case, that *Exod. 18.* so the burthen may be a pleasure vnto them. Not to make distinction of persons, as if the inferior were to base to come in triall before them, but onely the rich who may corrupt the law, (for this may, smell of Papall pride and couetousnesse, who reserues cases of such persons to his proper censure, because thereby he may picke their purses,) but onely of *causes* reseruing the waightiest, and most intricate to himselfe (which may aswell be incident to poore as rich) as hauing a more ripenesse of iudgment to discern thereof, and in wisdom better able then other to determine of the same. Thus will Godly Princes procure their ease, in performing their duties, and sanctifie their honour in vnder-going the burthen thereof.

Obfer. 46. But what shall we say of this *Persian Monarch*? Surely as he knew not GOD, so he knew not himselfe, neither any thing that truly belonged to his calling. The sword was his scepter and *lust* was his law, *pride* was his glorie and *saue* was his protector, his subjects wear his *slaves*, and his *Princes* were his *bands*; And therefore no maruaile though he loued to be rarely seene, especially of the subiect, whose spoile he daily intended: if happily of *Princes*, but to be his *fowlers* for the prey.

1

2

Vse 1. A iust hand of GOD vpon tyrannicall *Princes*, by their pride and cruelty to make them hatefull to their subiects, that what they feare may come vpon them, and so they may be sent to the King of feare. And an excellent lesson to Christian *Princes*, to keepe state by loue; and seeke glory in the discharge of their callings, that obeying GOD they may preuaile with men: and so establish their Kingdomes in this mortall life as to make them steps to the crowne of glory, It followeth. *What shall wee doe according to the Law.*

2

Verf. 19.

Obfer. 47.

Wicked pre-
send law for
the satisfying
of their mis-
chiefes.

Here we may see a shew of equity in this Godlesse Prince, though the disobedience of the Queene had much enraged him, yet neither in his rage doth he aueng himselfe of her, neither doth hee claime a priuiledge to do it contrary to his lawes (which happily he might haue done because the matter immediately concerned him selfe) neither doth he take vpon him to be iudge in his owne cause; but referres the matter to the iudgment of the law, and that to be scanned by the wisdom of his Councillors, wherein that he would not be his owne Iudge in his owne cause, but referres himselfe for satisfaction to the right censure of his lawes, herein if we iudge him by the outward action he did not amisse, his basenesse appeares in that, that whereas though he had referred himselfe to the sentence of his lawes, yet he should haue reserved both the exposition and iudgement of the Law vnto himselfe, as being a part of his royall prerogatiue; these his proper rights he leaues to their

their lusts who happily geſſing his minde might hereby ſatiſſie both their owne and his vnlawfull purpoſe, concerning the point that a man may not be Iudge in his owne caſe.

The equity hereof appeareth in this, that as men are blinde in their Iudgements and ſo cannot know themſelues, ſo they wilbe likely partiall in their owne matters, as louing themſelues to well: And therefore we muſt auoide all occaſions of euill. And ſeeing we muſt auoide all appearance of euill, therefore howſoeuer it may bee, that a man may herein Iudge righteouſly, yet ſeeing to the world it will appeare otherwiſe, therefore for the approouing of his good name in the eye of the world, he is not in my opynion to be Iudge in his owne caſe.

If it ſhalbe here demaunded how then may a man be produced in his owne caſe to the ſatiſfying of the world? the anſwere is plaine: he is not produced as a Iudge but as a witneſſe thereto, and not to as a witneſſe as if the Iudgement depended vpon himſelfe therein: but ſeeing his allegations are confirmed by an oath, as being the meanes which the Lord hath appointed to end controuerſies, whereby as he calls the Lord to be witneſſe to the truth, ſo he conuinceth the conſcience of the Iudge to aſſent thereto, therefore it is not the bare witneſſe that caries the matter, but God & that Iudge they approve the ſame.

Uſe 1. This utterly conuinceth all popiſh religion and proceedings, if they may not be their owne Iudges, but ſtand to the Iudgement of the world, and it condemneth alſo the ground, of that groſſe opynion, that we may be ſo perſit, as not to erre in our iudgements. *It caſteth to ground all pleas* for ſinne, whereof few can hold, but from this *aſſumpſit*, that wee may and muſt be Iudges in our owne caſes (*whatſoever you ſay*) *I know it is otherwiſe, you know not my caſe, and if you were in my ſteed, you would thinke otherwiſe.*

Obſ. 48.

Whether a man may be his owne Iudge.

Obſer. 49.

How a man may be a witneſſe in his owne cauſe.

Obſe. 50.

How a man ſhould be approved, when he ſtands vpon the teſtimony of innocency: contrary to the veridite, or report of the world.

All which, proceed from this only ground, that their is no competent iudge of my estate, but my selfe.

A notable fallacy, whereby Satan deceiues sinners; that because others many times iudge wrongfully of them, therefore they conclude that they best know themselves, and best may be their owne Iudges concerning their finnes.

A priueledge which how-soeuer they stand vpon, principally for this end, that their iniquity may be hidden from the eye of the world, seeing this is an especiall meanes not onely to ripen the sinne, but further also to harden the heart of the sinner. Therefore behold the admirable iustice of GOD, in taking the wicked in their owne snares, that hardnesse of heart, continuing impenitency, and so in the end working despaire: hereby it comes to passe, that they which would haue the iudgment deuolued to themselves; that so they may not discern the true iudgment of sinne, it shalbe vnto them as they do desire, they shall haue iudging enough, euen to sinke them to hell, they shall truely iudge of their damnable estate, and many times pronounce sentence against themselves, and therein mis-iudge of the mercies of GOD. And this is a third point condemned herein.

Obser. 51.
Wherein a
man may be
Iudge in his
owne case.

If therefore, we wil be safely Iudges in our cause, *let vs iudge our selues for sinne*, that wee bee not iudged of the LORD: And that we may thus iudge our selues, *let vs bee iudged by others*, submit we our selues wisely to the iudgement of the word: and *let vs not neglect the Iudgement of the world*, if it iudge wrongfully we haue wherein to reioyce: If it iudge aright, be we the more confounded that our righteousness is cracked in the worlds opynion; only beware we here of desperat iudgement, whereby we may exclude our selues, from hope of mercy, so iudging our selues by the law, that we also seeke pardon in the Gospell, that so wee may be eased of our heavy burthen. Thus being iudged we shall come to
true

Math. 11

true repentance, and recouering againe the fauour of God,
we shall also recouer the vprightnesse of our conscience,
and so we shalbe able to iustifie our owne innocency. And
thē we may safely not esteeme to be iudged of mans iudg-
ment, and yet not esteeme our selues iustified thereby, see-
ing, as what the law condemnes for, is in our selues, so
that for which we are acquitted is ours onely in Iesus
Christ; and though *our reioycing, be the testimony of our*
good conscience, which we may lawfully cleaue to, and
thereby acquite; yet seeing that GOD is greater then
the conscience; and *wee know not our owne soules*, and
also that vprightnesse which wee know, proceeds
from the righteousness of our Sauour, therefore as by
the imputacion of his righteousness, we are onely hap-
py: so to the same only we must ascribe euen the power
of that iustification before men, that notwithstanding pro-
ceeds from inherent righteousness, that so Christ may be
all in all.

Well, the King will not be his owne iudge, whom *then*
will bee bee iudged by? The holy Ghost answereth; by the
lawes of his Kingdome: which generally no doubt did
determine of the dutie of Mariage: though perticuler-
ly for this case the Law was made afterward. Now see-
ing this was practized among the heathen, how much
more righteous & wise a course is it, that euen, yet Christi-
an Princes (though in cases concerning themselves)
should refer themselves to the iudgment of their owne
lawes.

Because, as they are of their owne making, and therefore
it stands with their honor to iustifie the same, *so it is in their*
power to expound their owne lawes, and therefore may
lawfully make fauorable constructions for themselves,
according to the equiuy of the law: *Yea beeing also Iudges*
of the law themselves, and therefore may in discretion mi-
tigate the same.

Vfo 1. Which as it condemneth the grosse flattery, and ig-
norance of those that exempt the Prince from his gouerne-

1 Cor. 4. 4.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

Iob. 9.

Obfer. 52.

Princes are to
refer them-
selues to the
iudgment of
their lawes,
Verf. 12.

1

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2 ment of his owne lawes, making him thereby not onely
a grosse hipocrite, but a very Tyrant : *so it iustifieth* that
lawfull prerogatiue of Princes, which is to bee makers
and interpreters, yea Iudges of their owne lawes.

3 Againe, this also reprooueth the abuse of lawes which
4 great ones breake thorough, and onely small flies are
5 caught in. *As also*, that man of sinne is here condem-
ned, who hath reiected the law of GOD, and wil be
gouerned onely by his owne filthy lusts. Lastly, who-
soeuer measure their righteousnesse *by example*, or *opi-*
nion, stand vpon *customs* or any such like, *reiecting the law of*
God, for the rule of their life, they are also condemned in
this place.

6 Sixty we are here taught to blesse GOD for good
lawes, and to pray vnto him for the executing thereof;
that great ones may lead, and the rest may follow, and
that (euery man may do as he list) may not bee heard
of in our streetes.

Well, thus hath the King referred the matter to the
Iudgment of the law, and surely herein he did not amisse,
onely in this may he be iusly charged of folly, that he
kept not the sword of expounding, and approouing the
law in his owne hand; but vnwisely puts it ouer to
the determining of his Councillors. The reason where-
of although we may partlie gesse, because he would not
be rid of his wife, but with some colour, and other must
do that which he would not be seene in.

Obfer. 53.

Wicked Prin-
ces imloy
their seruants
in hafe pur-
poses.

2 Samu. 12.

Verf. 16. 17. &
18.

A matter vsuall in wicked Princes to deuolue the en-
uie of their vile courses vpon their Ministers of state; by
putting for a time the sword in their hands, as *David* did
into the hands of *Ioab*: yet that this was not done with-
out great inconuenience, may appeare liuely by their
handling thereof. See what it is to put a sword into a mad-
mans hand; harke how *Memucan* the *Eunuch*, laies about
him. *And Memucan said before the King and the*
Princes.

The Queene *Vasby* hath not onely sinned against the
King.

King but against al the Princes and people which are in all the Prouinces of the King *Ahasuerus &c.*

Thus, instead of a Iudge he becomes an accuser; and the Summe of his exaggeration, or rather indeed accusation (contained in these three verses) is this, *that Quene Vashties sinne is herein exemplary*, such as shall prouoke like contempt throughout the Land, among all sortes, as pleading herein the example of the Queene and thereby taking occasion to disobey their husbands. Wherevpon will ensue much despitfullnesse, and wrath.

And surely, in that he apprehends *the sinne to be exemplarie*, herein hee iudged not amisse; For indeed the sinnes of great ones they are both patternes, and priuiledges to the inferior; for the like: *Who liue by examples*, and take heart thereby, seeing the greates ones sinne visually, without controulement.

Use 1. And therefore of all sortes, great men are to take least liberty in sinne, *because the eye of the world is fixed on them*, and they shall answer deeply for the sinnes of others, in that by their example they giue warrant thereto.

And inferiours also may here learne their lesson, not to pleade example, but to liue by the Lawes, seeing how-soeuer examples may hinder obedience to the law, yet the Law shall preuaile to the punishment of those, that by the example of great ones breake the same.

But that he falles to accuse, where rather he should haue excused, and in steed of healing the wound makes it farre wider: this howsoeuer it may be good for an orator, yet it cannot stand with the wisdom of a graue Councillor. But some-what was in the winde: hee must needs speake thus because he had his free: the King was angry, and hee ment to see him going: the Queene was an eye-soare, and shee must bee remoued. Such slaues are ambitious straites to their owne and their Princes

Obs. 54.
Sinnes of
great ones
exemplary.

2
3

4

Obs. 55.
Po. iudians
in lat. a. ying
the lust of
wicked Prin-
ces provide for
their owne.

2 Reg. 13.

2 Reg, I I.

Ioh, 13.

1 ukc, 2 3.

lufts, but especially when their owne plow is driuen forward withall. Then the honour of the King, and good of the land must be pretended, when indeed they will especially serue their owne turne therein.

1 Pse. This may teach Princes how they put such, to much in trust; and therein also to use the fauor of their Princes more moderately, not exasperating them against other, least the foame light vppon them-selues, and their owne stroke retorne vppon their owne pates: Their owne iniustice deserves no lesse, and the iustice of God shall finde them out in their sinne, *Hamans* gallowes in the end catcheth himselfe.

*O*bf. 56. Flatterers & malicious persons abuse Princes with whisperings and surmises.

But let vs a little further examine the truth of this accusation. Must all the Land know of this fact of *Vashty*? doth the country know alwaies whats done at Court? see here what a vnderlie foundation mallice groundes vpon, how flatterers abuse Princes, with surmizes, & scarce likely-hoods? Was this a sound argument to wntloose the marriage knot? Shall the state of a Queene depend vpon such dalliance? Shall a King be abused by if and peraduentures? Well wee see here that *a friend in Court is better then a good cause*; and

*Obs. 57. Evid-
ence must be
of things
known not
surmised and
such as know
the party de-
linquent.
Light out of
darknesse.*

it is an easie matter to finde a staffe to beat a dogge. withal, (as we say in the prouerbe) *Pobre Kinsity* must be condemned without retriual: and therefore the countrie must come in to giue in euidence against her, that happily neuer saw her by the face, nor euer had to doe with her. And yet the Lord had a righteous worke herein; both to *punish her pride*, which likely the country paid for, and to *punish the King*; who abused her pride; yea most especially to *punish these Counsellors*, euen in this their wrong collection, as hereby bringing this shame vppon them, that they were not maisters of their owne wises. This was all they gotte by it, euen reproach and ignominy, & let all vnrighteous Iudges looke for no better than in stead of qualifying small offences will set them on the way to punish the harts of prophane Princes, *honorour beed them with this* 1591. 27.

But consider (I pray you) a link further the in-
consequence

quence of the accusation, so that all the women of the Land should heare of it, yet must euery wise here-vpon of necessitie rebell against their husband? might not priuate loue ouer-rule a publike example, and wise gouernment of the husband preuent the like disobedience? probable happily it might bee, that some might thus resist, which without this example would haue bene forward ynough thereto, but that all of necessitie must follow, this may discouer the Accusers blind mallice, but was no reason to inforce the poore Queenes punishment.

But here you may see when flattery and mallice gives information, shadowes are made substances, & improbabilities necessities, so deceitfull is flattery, mallice so vnreasonable: and yet herein also the Lord is exceeding righteous, who meets hereby with other sins of this insolent Queene, that whereas no doubt she was an example of pride and vanitie more generally to other women, then shee was likely to be in this point; therefore is shee heerby found out in her sinne, and by this vnlikely accusation condemned of a true fault.

Well thus wee haue heard this *Persian* play the Accuser, now let vs heare how he plaies the Iudge. Thus hee shooeth his bolt.

If it please the King let a royall decree proceed from him, Verse. 19. and let it be written among the Statutes of Media and Persia. (And let it not be transgressed) that Vashy come no more before the King Ahashuerosh, and let her estate royall be giuen vnto her companion that is better then she.

Behold here the sentence of this vnrighteous Iudge, discouering most apparantly his folly and crueltie: was it not ynough for him to aggrauate a small fault by surmizes and improbabilities therby to incense and so wrong the King, but now hee must sentence the sinne with so extreame a Iudgement, as had bene proportionable to the greatest offence? Indeed had hee onely aggrauated the matter to haue satisfied the King; and that the Queene might haue bene brought to acknowledge her fault, that so the King
being

Mallice and
flattery vnite
accusers.

Punishment
must needs
exceed the nature
of the sin

beeing satisfied might bee inclined to mercie, and the Queene heereby also fitted to mercy: Hee had shewed the part of a faithfull Counsellor, and performed the dutie of a wise Iudge: But thus to adde drunkenness to thirst in condemning so extremely, when hee accused falsely, shewed his treachery in counsell and corruption in iudgement.

Judges ought
to be impartiall
all in iudgement,
not to respect persons.

Only heerein wee may somewhat excuse him, and in this may hee be a patterne of righteous iudgement; that hee seemes to bee impartiall in pronouncing of his sentence, hee spareth not the Queene, seeing shee hath offended: and doth hee therefore well to pronounce so seuerely against her? For admit we the fault deserved some punishment? is their therefore no measure, but euen extremity? could hee haue deuised a greater? could the poore Queen haue vndergone an extremer? Is this to kill the sinne for the good of the offender, and not to strengthen the sinne by driuing the guilty to dispare? What then doth this Iudge plead for him-selfe to iustifie the equity of this his extreame sentence? doth he plead as Diuines do, that sinne was committed against the greatest person, and the thing commaunded being very indifferent, therefore by these circumstances the offence was more haynous; and so did deserue so haynous a punishment? or doth hee rather like a Polititian heereby iustifie the Kinges anger; by inflicting so extreame a punishment for the prouoking thereof? Doth hee as a bawde heereby make way for change, as happily smelling the Kinges purpose heerein? Surely though happily in pollicy hee intended both the one and the other, because rather then Princes must erre the subiect shal deeply smart for it; and Courtiers many times are glad to be such cooks that they may also lick their owne fingers: Yet in pollicie he hides all these and makes a faire glose vpon it, he implies that one must be made an example for the procuring of peace to many, better one perish then that vnitie bee destroyed: For saith hee.

When

When the decree of the King which shall bee made shall Ver. 10.
bee published throughout all his Kingdome (though it bee
great) all the women shall giue their husbands honour both
great and small.

Heere wee may see the height of his wisdom, hee prouides for him-selfe and his like, that they may haue honour of their wiues. But for his Lord and maister hee must haue no honour from his, but rather he must be dishonoured, In putting her off vpon so slight a cause, and the miserable Queene must bee dishonoured also, and that with apparant wrong and eternall contumely. So cunning are Politicians to secure them-selues with the dishonour of their princes: So foolish are such Princes thus to bee ledde by the nose by them, so righteous is the Lord to make the one here by a rodde vnto the other, that Politicians hereby growing insolent and great, are catcht in their month and so emptied in their Princes, as beeing sponges to fill them-selues with the spoyle of others, that they may afterwards wring them out at their pleasure.

Worldlings
prefer the pri-
uate before
the publike
good.

Thus you see the depth of his counsell, and yet behold what a goodly vaile he hath to cast ouer it: *The woman shall giue honour.* As if hee had said that they being made wife by the Queenes punishment would hereafter not dare but honour their husbandes, least they also bee subiect to the like censure. Doe you not see what a maske heere is to couer his crueltie? It is good faith hee that some should bee made examples to keepe other in awe, and therefore let *Vasby* smart soundly for it, that all wee may liue more peaceably.

Wicked haue
glorious
clokes for eu-
ell purposes.

A most righteous thing: that some should bee made examples, and yet the Queene might well haue beene spared out of the number of those some, if her fault would not, yet her state at least should haue priuiledged her, euery small fault must not make an example, though exemplarie iustice bee profitable for others. But shall it bee graunted that this example would bee profitable

Exemplary
iustice when
to be vied.

The Churches deliuerance.

44

Terror is
breeder of
true loue.

profitable? will terror breed true loue and can their be honour without loue. Well therefore might this *Parthian* hereby dominere ouer his wife bouldly, well might shee crouch for feare and play the hypocrite with him, well might she flatter him in his sinne and further him to hell, as being all the honour that carnall men looke for of their wiues, but true honour will neuer bee yeilded by terror, flattery is not loue, nor scothing true submission: So that howsoeuer, in other cases this course might haue had successe, yet in this case betweene man and wife a farre better might haue beene taken. Namely to haue laboured with the King to bee reconciled to his wife, Oh this example of mercy had beene more vndoubtedly profitable.

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Math. 19.

Vse 1. *So let vs make vp the breach, and not set it more open. Let our censures ayme at the sinne for the recovery of the partie, and let charity couer especially small offences, build we not vpon surmizes to cast away life, least we exalt our selues by the fall of others. Above all things keepe we holy and inuiolable the marriage bed, and let onely the defiling thereof be the cause of perpetuall seperation: as for such ordinary breaches as are betwixt man and wife, let vs compose them wisely among our selues. Is their none wiser then other, that we must beray our owne nests, and discover our weaknesse abroad that wee may be snared with our owne infermities? Had *Ahasuerus* beene wife the matter needed not to haue gone any further, and then his Princes had spared that labour and he had escaped this dishonor: yea the miserable *Queene* had not thus wickedly beene diuorced: But as it seemed the King was set vpon it, and therefore no sooner had *Mannan* pronounced the sentence without demurre on the matter, or delay of the execution: but the holie Ghost addeth that. *The saying pleased the King and the Princes.**

Verse 21.
Wicked Prin-
ces easily
yelde to
bad counsell.

So hard are wicked Princes to be pleased with good Councell: and so easily doe they embrace euen that which

which is pernicious. But how shall it appeare the Kinge was pleased here-with: It followeth because hee ratifies the sentence pronounced: Hee did(sayth the spirit) *According to the word of Menuchan*, and to shew his willingnesse therein, least after-witte might crosse it, hee sendes his lawes throughout all the Prouinces to this effect, *That every man should beare rule in his owne house*: And that the law concerning all, each might take notice of it. *It must bee published in the Language of that same people.* That so the lawe beeing published might not afterward(euen for his credite) be abrogated.

Ver. 12.

But what might bee the cause of all this haste? Surely lette vs heere looke vp to GOD and the matter will bee cleared. The Church of GOD was like to bee in extremitie, and delaie was dangerous. *Hester* was to bee aduanced that shee might be meanes of deliueraunce, and therefore *Vasby* must bee deprived of her Regall dignitie, that so according to the sentence, her royall estate might be giuen to her companion that was better then shee. So doe the wicked therein fulfill the will of GOD wherein they doe agaynst his will, and in their wickednesse are his righteous instruments that hee may haue the glorie in bringing light out of darkenesse, and they might confounded in their owne maliciousnesse: Whereby wee may learne in all such Accidentes, as principally to looke vp to GOD in the vse of such instruments, so not to iustifie the instrument though well vsed of the LORD, nor to condemne the LORD for the obliquitie of the instrument, but wisely here to discern betweene thinges that differ, giuing God the prerogatiue of his providence, euen to vse euill wisely, and humbling man in his pride that hee serues GODS turne heerein wickedly.

Wicked instruments of fulfilling of gods righteous will in their punishments for his glory and the good of the Church.

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And

And therefore let not *Mepnucan* bragge that he had cast out *Vashty*. Nor let *Abashtuerosb* boast that he hath done his will.

Acts. 4.
Psal. 75.
Luk. 1.
Promotion
from God.

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Esay. 42.

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Iob. 12.

Prosperity of
the wicked
momentany.

*Athalia.**Iezabel.**Achab.*

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Psa. 125.

No they did no more herein then God had appointed, it was the Lord that aduanced *Vashty*, and it was he alone that did cast downe the proud from their seate. It is the Lord that seteth vp, and hee onely casts downe, hee onely will haue the glory, neither will hee giue it to any other.

And therefore let noe mans heart faile him because with God nothing is impossible. If he cast downe who then can lift vp, if he do aduance who then shall cast downe, about all things therefore make we sure of him, that vp or downe we may stand or fall vnto him.

And is *Vashty* so suddenly downe that was so late a-lost? is the prosperity of the wicked so sitting and momentany, that so GOD may be more exalted and they much more confounded, shall the wicked be abased that the Godly may come in their stead? and euen in this life will the Lord make some of them examples of his power and providence to condemne their Atheisme and confound their security. Oh then let iustice here learne to haue no respect of persons, let great ones know that the law is aboue them, and let the inferior feare seeing the greatest are finitten, let no man promise settled happinesse, vnto himselfe in this life, nay let no wise man set his heart vpon this present happinesse, Let the falls of the wicked teach vs to get sure footing in faith where we shall neuer be remoued but be euer had in remembrance, and seeing we haue here no abiding Citty, seeke we diligently after that which is aboue, that so wee may be receiued into euerlasting habitations.

Lastly consider wee wisely the Tenor of the decree: Namely, *That euery man should beare rule in his house.*

Here then you see the scope and drift of the law, namely to establish a comely order in the Oeconomical government

ment that the head may rule and the rest may obey.

Thus euell examples are the occasions of good lawes and euen the wicked when they satisfie their lusts, subscribe vnto the righteous law of God, For howsoeuer no doubt the law proceeded from lust, and could not chuse but redound to the shame of the lawgiuers who were not lawes to them-selues neither could rule their families and therefore they must haue a law to force this obedience and it is a miserable obedience which is onely forced by the law, yea if we consider the nature of this prophane people to apt of it selfe to Lord it ouer the weaker, and therefore needed rather a bridle to curbe their tyranny, then any warrant to make good their imperiousnesse, therefore to them the law was not seasonable, (so wisely ought lawes to be fitted to the state and conditions of the people) yet if we shal consider the matter of the law in it selfe, as it hath it ground out of the law of nature so is it warranted also by the word of God. For doth not the law of nature inforce no lesse, then that they which are best able by reason of their different strength; they which deserue best, as being the providers for the family, they which must defend all and so shall answer for all, that they I say should haue the preheminnce. And doth not the word of GOD iustifie this law of nature which giues vnto man the superiority ouer the wife, and that not onley in the time of mans fall, as if before they were one flesh, and therefore no difference of superiority betweene them (as if this superiority were only a part of his or the wifes punishment :) but also in the time of his restitution by Christ; thereby iustifying the holy right thereof, and approuing the same to be a speciall blessing. Wherein we may behold an admirable providence of God, that how-soeuer this law of superiortie concerned euen the state of innocencie, because euen to that happy condition this holy subiection was necessary. Yet is not this law giuen till the fall of man, because then there was necessary vse thereof in regard

Wicked in
their sinnes
serue Gods
righteous will.

1. Sam.
Num. 24.

Husbands are
to rule ouer
their wiuers,
1. Vfe.

Gen. 3.

Gen. 3.

Ephe. 5.
Col. 3.

1. Tim. 2.

1. Cor. 11.

in regard of sin that now had taken footing, which though it giue no way to proud insulting & imperious behaiour, much lesse allow power of bitter speaking, cruel correction, or iudiciall proceeding in the case of life, because though the husband bee a King in his familie, yet his kingdome is but spirituall, and for temporall reformatiōs subiect to the Temporall sword: no otherwise to take the same into his hand then by speciall warrant from the ciuill Magistrate: yet it establissheth such a power ouer the wife as Christ hath ouer his Church, if to cal *Peter* Sathan when he sinnes of ignorance, then much more to reprove sharply presumptuous sinnes, that God may be iustified and sinne ashamed, & repentance being renewed may be the renewing of loue: as treading loue vnder foote in regard of Gods glory in the aduancing thereof, confirming our affections, which as yet condemne the basenes of such carpet Knights that prostitute their dignitie as a baud to lust, and become slaues to their wiues for a little dalliance: so hereby wee may learne also for conclusion in this point, to giue God his right and superioritie ouer vs in a happy conquest of our rebellious affections, that so wee may retayne our dignitie ouer our wiues. Had these prophane men learned this lesson they had not needed a law to haue procured this dignitie. But for want hereof. euen their law they thinke scarce strong ynough, and therefore they indeauour to strengthen it with a further pollicy. Namely, *1 They cause it to be published in the seuerall language of each Nation*, that so being particularly vnderstood, it might appeare more authentically, and being hereby intēded as waighthy, & in good earnest it might both more easily procure obedience and so take away the hatred from the law-giuers. For seeing no doubt the repudiating of the *Queene* for so small a matter, must needs heare odious in the eares of the subiects, therefore to qualifye this hatred the people must bee gratified, and (wherein thinke these wise men) shall wee gratifie them better then by giuing them power to domineere ouer their wiues; so that now though they vse them neuer so contemptuously

And how far

Math. 16.

Wicked iustifie their sin by making it common to others.

gentuously yet this law shall stop their mouthes, and so tyranny shall increase from the highest to the lowest, wronging and repudiating what shall not now be lawfull. So politicke are great ones to cloake their owne sinnes, by making them common, and so iustificable in others: So wisely doth the Lord confound them in this their pollicie y while by this communicating of the law to either, they prouide for their credits, they doe not hereby discouer their shame but by this meanes also ripening sinne generally they prepare the way to Gods generall iudgements.

Vse. Well howsoeuer the drift of these politickes might herein be wicked in publishing these lawes thus to catch in their mother tongue, yet is there an equitie in this point y may teach vs many good lessons.

Namely seeing lawes are published in such a language that they may be knowne to all; therefore as no man may clayme priuiledge beyond the law, so we are hereby taught to be acquainted with the lawes, not to intrap others or defend our selues from wrong onely, but that so we may performe conscionably obedience to the same. And if so bee we are to take notice of mens ordinances, that so wee may obey them, how ought then our delight to be in the law of the Lord that so we may meditate therein day and night, *Psal. 1.2.* And by the direction of the same reforme our waies Which as it condemneth that man of sinne who lockes vp hys law of libertie in an vnknowne tongue, that so not knowing the will of God wee might not care to performe it, so it may cause vs to lament the ignorance of the world euen in such places where the Gospell is receiued, and to feare for the fruit of this ignorance (euen desperate wickednesse) that the iudgements of God are not far from vs.

Lawes to be published in the vulgar tongue.

Argument and parts.

CHAPTER. 2.

THe remorse of the King with the power of it, *Ver. 1.*
 The corrupt meanes is vsed for the contentment of
 him: Yet very holily disposed and wisely vsed by the
 Lord for deliueraunce of his Church. From the 2. *verse* to
 the 7. The intertainment of the meanes together with the
 preparation and approbation thereof, as also the consum-
 mation, in the marriage of *Hester*. From the 8. vnto the
 22.

Lastly the confusion of all this Iollitie by a consequent
 danger, which notwithstanding is discryed, and preuented
 by the Church, for the good of the Church to the end of
 the Chapter.

After these things, 1. (after the wine was out and the
 sentence past and executed against the Queene) *when the
 wrath of King Abashuerosh was appeased. i.* (That is when *ſ*
 Wine beeing out, and the object of his wrath remoued, the
 passion ceased for the time) *hee remembred Vastty and what
 ſhee had done and what was decreed against her.*

He considered both the benefit of a wife which hee was
 now depriued off, as also the small cause that had robd him
 of so great a comfort, & also hee could not forget the base-
 nesse of his Councillors and the wrong sentence that was
 pronounced against her.

After these things, 1. After that the scaſt was past, and the
 wine and *Abashuerosh* was parted, and by the decree of his
 wife-men his wife was departed; and so both the ſwell of
 his anger spent, and the lust therof satisfied: *After these things
 ſaith the word of truth, was the wrath of the King appeased.*
 And so this mad fit (you ſee) is ended: the spirit doth not ſay
 that he repented of his anger or that he laboured to make
 amends for the ſame but onely this, that his anger was ap-
 peased, that is, not forſaken as a ſin, but only qualified, and
 for

for a time laid a sleep to be raked vp againe vppon as slight
an occasion, Wherein the holy Ghost doth notably sette
downe vnto vs the manner how the wicked leaue their sin
or rather how sinne indeed leaues the wicked; not to cleare
them of the *guilt* of it, no nor for the *corruption* of the same,
but onely for a time leaues them in regard of the *rage* or the
temptation, that so flattering themselues with the imputati-
on of great maisteries ouer them-selues, as if heereby they
were great *conuers*, and beeing puffed vp heereby they
may be dtowned in securite, that so the sinne returning
in a seauen times worse manner it may repossesse them
more fully, and so their latter end may be worse then their
beginning.

Wherein wee may behold the Admirable prouidence
of GOD, who giuing the wicked their desire that they
shall haue their fill of sinne, doth by this especiall meanes
dispose the same, euen by brideling some-times the rage
of sinne, and giuing intermission to the force of the
temptation.

For as by this restraining them, he makes them
more fitte for humaine society, which (if they should
continew in their outrage) would not indure them, and
so thereby keepes them from many legall punishments
which happyly though they meete with the body might
bee a meanes to saue the soule; whereby hauing occasi-
ons offered to pursue their iniquities, as they forflow
them not, yet still either for feare or credit they are some-
what bridled: so the more the fire is suppressed the more
it inwardly rageth, and thereby takes deeper roote in the
vnbeleeuing heart: so y to the wicked the outward ceasing
of the streame, tends to the inward increase of the corrupt
fountaine, which afterwards vpon occasion wil breake out
with greater violence: And so much the rather is sin hereby
strengthened, because by this stay of our sin, not only y heart
is flattered with shew of vertue & so therby hardened, but as
the falling of one wave is the raising of an other, so the
wicked are as the raging Sea foaming at their owne

Oh. How
the wicked
leaue sinne.

Selfe.
Gods prouidence
discouered here-
in.

By 4.8.

shame, the intermission of one sinne is the prouocation to another: That so by this meanes being plunged in all kindes of wickednesse, they might bee giuen vp to a *reprobate sence*, & so make vp the measure of our vnauoydable destruction.

Sell. 2.

Occasions of
the ceasing
of sinne in
the wicked.
Prouer, 26. 10.

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Luk. 11. 21. 9.

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Sell. 3. How
the spirit brid-
les sin in the
wicked.

A matter which will yet appeare more manifest vnto vs if wee obserue the *occasion* of the wicked in leauing off sinne, which is not any *worke of grace* wrought in the heart, proceeding from the power of Christ through the preaching of the word, but onely such outward accident effects the same: which inwardly reuiues the sinne, and so ripens the sinner to his iust condemnation. For either the wine is out, and so the *occasion* ceasing, the sinne for a time slaketh from its heate; or our *credit* bridleth though our heart be good; either we *fear* the *smart*, and so we dare not be meddling, or else we are *out of date*: and so sinne hath left vs, some such thing it is, either wee are *deeper in elsewhere*, and so you you must spare vs heere, or else (as the manner of drunkards is) wee will not sinne in gluttony, that wee *may sinne deeper* in drunkennesse. Nay to *maintaine inward corruptions*, as spirituall pride, hypocrisie and such like, wee will *sinper* it mannerly in the outward carriage: What shall I say; may not sinne outwardly cease *when the Diuell ceaseth tempting*? And is he not vsually quiet where all's his owne? Wee will not bee *riotous in sinne* that wee may longer hold therein: And to say the best in this case; though wee would runne riot, yet the *spirit of God* will *bridle* vs therein, though not for our owne, yet for others good, and yet wee shall not champe the bridle; but willingly indure it; the Lord not forcing the will, but leauing it to its rage, and by contrary occasions iustly prouoking the same: For either the Spirit *bestowes gifts of knowledge &c.* vpon vs, which that wee may put forth to the utmost, for the maintaining of spirituall pride, therefore we desire to bee restrained from grosse and open sinnes. Or else wee *attaine to some such calling in the Church or commonwealth*.

wealth which because it cannot bee managed with credit if wee fall into soule offences; therefore for our glory and estimation we desire heere also to be restrayned; and so are either kept, or not suffered to rest in those grosse iniquities: Either the spirit *awakens the conscience*; and so sinne is suppressed, and for a time hindered: Or else on the contrary; *custome deads the conscience*, and so sinne is quiet, because it is not felt; In a word, *either some rod is our bridle* that we cannot as we would, or our *profit* will not suffer vs to riot as wee haue done; though otherwise we exchange for a worse sinne, of deceit or coueteousnesse: Either wee *reiourne* sinne because wee haue now no leysure, or else wee *loppe off onely the branches* and leaue the roote behinde. Yea so impossible is it for the wicked to forsake sinne truly that they are not onely ignorant of the chiefe sinnes which especially raigne in them, yea doe not vnderstand the power thereof, but euen those that they knowe they will not acknowledge to bee sinnes, either by *corruption of iudgement* taking light for darkenesse, or by the *shallownesse* thereof, apprehending onely the out-side of sinne, and so the best they doe is but to make cleane the out-side of the platter. Thus you see the *occasions* why the wicked leaue sinne, as also the *manner* and *measure* of it ceasing in them.

1 *Vse.* Wherin we may learne as to iudge wisely of al such glorious shewes of ciuill honesty, naturall righteousnesse, hypocrisie, and such like which go currant in the world for true conuerfions.

2 So by the contrary notes we may iudge our selues comfortably whether we be in the faith or no.

And because they which will liue godly in Christ Iesus must suffer many afflictions; harken we for our comfort to that which yet followeth, the holy Ghost saith, *the Kings anger is appeased.* And for the Churches good, the Lord shall cease the rage of the wicked: *Ahabsmere* shall be angry that *Vasby* may be diuorced, and his

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Stil. 4.
Impossible
for the rich
to forsake sin.
Rom. 7.

Blay, 5 21.

Math. 23.

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Ohf. 2,
The rage of
the wicked
shall cease for
the good of
the Church.

1. Cor. 10. 13. anger shalbe appeased, that *Hester* may be aduanced.
 1 So faithfull is our God not to tempt vs aboute our strength
 2 so mightily doth he bridle the rage of our enemies : so
 3 graciously hereby doth he scale vnto vs our eternall rest
 and happinesse.

Vse. 1. And therefore why art thou presumptuous oh thou
 1 enemy seeing the goodnesse of God herein appeareth
 Ps. 42. daily ? Oh why art thou so disquieted oh my soule seeing
 2 the hand of the Lord is not shortned towards thee ? Oh be
 3 still in thy God and trust in him . For he will yet be thy
 4 redeemer and thy mercifull God, and for thy eternall com-
 fort store vp this cordiall, that though God is not as man
 to thy hurt and confusion, yet wherein man is good to thee,
 therein is he infinitely more : if a mother cannot forsake
 her child then much lesse will he leaue thee, if *Ahasuerosh*
 cease his anger that the Church may haue deliuerance,
 thou maist then be sure , that his anger will *not last for*
euer , but though he hath beene angry with thee a little
 yet in eueralsting compassion will he gather thee againe.
 And for they learning yet obserue here an other point,
 Namely that as thou woulds not haue thy God to be
 angry for euer, so thou must cease from anger. So did
 here this wicked Prince and shall he rise vp in iudgment
 against thee ? so nature teacheth thee that thy passions
 must haue end, and wisdom aduise thee that anger
 rest not in thy bosome, thy profit will teach thee that
 things may well goe forward and thy pleasure will per-
 swade thee that there may be peace with God and man;
 what shall I say ? if thou hast caught a viper yet see thou
 norish him not, to sinne is naturall but to continew is
 diuelish.

Obs. 8.

Anger must
be renounced.

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Not to be ius-
tified

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Vse. And therefore say not with *Ionas* thou dost well
 to be angry : it is for thy credit who could endure it:
 Its good to purge choler and thus I will be avenged,
 Its good that thou art ; thou dost not well to be angry, thy
 glory shall be thy shame, Thy Christ hath endured more
 for thee, and this shall purge thee of grace, and wilt thou
 plucke

plucke out both thine owne eyes, to plucke out one of thy brothers ? if thou wilt be aduizd by me feede not thy anger, but rather ease thee of such a guest, as will eate thee out of house and home, view thy selfe therefore presently in the glasse of the word, and see what a monster thy wrath hath made thee; a distracted head, and furious countenance, eyes sparkling fire, and hands full of bloud, a mouth forming out thine owne shame, and feete carrying thee swiftly to the fruit thereof; Let thy feete therefore carry thee from the obiect of thy wrath and impose silence to thy selfe that thou maist reason with thy passion, hold thy hands wisely, least thou repent at leasure, and looke vp to that consuming fire whome thou daily offendest, imploy thy wit and memory in recording the mercies of thy God, and this shall moue thee to forgiue thy Brother, and remember thy end (thou maist not liue an houre) and therefore let not the sonne go downe vpon thy wrath.

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Remedies of
vniust anger.

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Surely if thou wilt not forsake thy sinne by remembering thy end, behold thy sinne shall remember thee euen when thou wouldst forget it, and though the King (no doubt) would haue beene spared this *memento*, yet saith the spirit, *He remembred Vainety and what she had done*. This sonne of Adam is now called to account in the cooling of his passions and his conscience remembers him of his former outrage: so wise is the Lord to schoole him in his better moode, so iust is he also not to leaue sinne unpunished, and all this by the power of conscience left in man by nature; which though it *excuse* for sinne, as it is misinformed by the corrupt iudgment, that so the sinner might be encouraged to do the same, yet withall doth it *check and repress* the doing thereof, And though it in some measure *informe* vs in wel-doing, yet it *accuseth* also euen that very wel-doing, to the iust confusion of Carnall confidence, and most righteously also *accuseth* for sinne, both to iustifie God against whome the sin is committed, & by *convincing* the sinner so to leaue him

4.Ephe.26.

Obfer.4.

The consci-
ence calls the
wicked to ac-
count in this
life together
with the vse of
it in them.

Mat.10.19.10;
Iohn.16.

Rom.15.

Esay.29.13.

Iob. 12. 14.

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Ezec. 8. 17.

Ioh. 3. 10.

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Obse. 5.

The particuler
evidence of
conscience.

without excuse, and thereby to yeeld him vp to the iaylor to be referred for vengeance euen til he haue paid the vttermost farthing. Oh consider this yea that forget God and say the Lord hath forgotten, he is hid in the clouds, behold your conscience will condemne you for sinne, and God which is greater then the conscience must much more condemne you, consider I say you vnwife among the people, that looke vpon the wine in the cuppe, and count it pleafant in the going downe thereof, will in not in the end bite like a serpent and wound like a Cockatrice? will not thy conscience write bitter things against thee? remember that for all this thou must come to indgement, and thy conscience shall beginne thy iudgement in this life, hope not therefore to corrupt thy conscience as if it should not accuse, labour not to dead it that it may not accuse thee; flatter not thy selfe when it doth excuse thee for sinne, But blesse thy God that thou maist see thy true face in it, And blesse him againe that thy conscience keeps thee from security, And keepe this watch true, by daily setting it by the word, that so it may tell true, and not deceiue thee, And sicing it tells true rebell not against it, though it be but a worme it will turne againe: and at the best it will so sting thee, that thou shalt wish thy selfe with the wormes. Of all torments most feare this rod, and yet of al gods sanctified looke for best issue of this.

But what doth the conscience here remember vnto this miserable King? surely she forgets not any thing that may torment him, she remembers him of his beautifull Queene, whose comfort he had now lost, that so he might see how iustly he was punished.

Now he burnes in lust, yea she remembers of that small fault which the poore Queene had committed, that so his sinne might yet appeare to be the greater in putting her away for so slight an offence, yea she remembers him also of those base Courtiers that had beene ministers to his lust, that yet hee might bee more vile in himselfe as to haue abased him to such counsellors: yea she remembers

remembers him of the *decree*, excluding her restitution that so this might cut his heart the more, in that the euill was remediless, that the constancy of his lawes must make him constant in his misery.

Thus you see the conscience remembers with a witnesse, she failes not a particuler but sets his sinnes in order before him, and she plaies the Orator to amplifie his sinnes that so he may haue soure sauce for his vnsauory pleasures,

So doth the Lord of conscience iudge righteously: so shall the sonne of God iudge the world; we shall giue an account euery one euen of the things which he hath done in his body whither they be good or bad.

So may we belecue that their shalbe a generall iudgment when we feele the conscience thus making way for the sinne, so by this secret arraignment may we still be put in mind of that sudden and yet most certaine iudgment, that so when our Maister commeth he may find vs ready. So by this particular iudgement of the conscience may we learne particularly to iudge our selues, yea to make the worst of our sinnes that God may make the best of them.

He remembred the decree } some-what more their is in this that he is said to *remember the decree*, wherein I take it the Holy Ghost would haue vs to vnderstand the maine bar of his repentance, that he could not make recompence to his wife, nor restore him-helfe to his right, which by rashnesse and folly he had stript him-helfe of, and therein also to discouer his desperate condition that he is vterly excluded from all hope of reconciliation, the meanes hereto is intimated to be the decree, euen that decree which his wife counsellors had propounded vnto him, and he in madnesse hauing assented thereto, cannot now with his safety and credit recall it againe.

His conscience tells him that it was a rash decree and therefore was to be disanulled: but his *credit* tells him that it stands not with his *honor* least their should appeare an

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Obfer.6.

The accusati-
on of the con-
science in the
wicked an hin-
derance to re-
pentance.

Obfer.7.

Credit in the
wicked oppo-
sed to consci-
ence whereby
repentance
error is hindered.

error is hindered.

error in his gouernment (a thing which Princes will no way heare of; as they are peerelesse in greatnesse so they must be accounted absolute in goodnesse: that so they may robbe GOD of his honour; and he may lay their honour in the dust) yea his *safety* tells him that he must not crosse his Princes, nor antiquate his lawes, least his Princes rebell, and turne the edge of the law against him.

And therefore in his carnall Wisdome he stickes to that which was his best hold, namely to prouide for his credit, and present safety, as for the conscience, that was but a fit of melancholy, and howsoeuer it might lead him to the hope of a better life, if hee would haue obeyed; yet being without that hope, no maruaile if he leaues the guide thereto and so makes ship-wracke of his conscience to embrace this present world.

Behold the miserable estate of the sonnes of *Adam*! here is a Kingdome diuided against it selfe and can it continew? here is credit against conscience, and safety of life present opposed against the security of the life to come: but will you see the issue? the leane Kine deuoure the fat, credit reiects conscience, and present contentment excludes the hope of future happinesse. And yet the Lord is exceeding righteous herein, who though he hath appointed to fat vp the wicked hereby to the day of slaughter, yet by this combat doth it appeare that hee puts the choice to themselues.

Self. 1.
Gods Iustice
herein.

Deu. 30. 19

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Psal. 17. 14

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Behold I set before thee this daie life and death, good and euill, therefore choose life that thou and thy seed may liue. Tea that they may the rather be allured to the better: behold the Lord filles their bellies with hidden treasures, and tries them thereby whether they will belecue and see greater things then these: *Tea* he tries them also by some crosses and afflictions, that he might see what is in their hearts and whether they will obey his commandments or no.

Deu. 8. 2.

But all is one, they haue set vp their rest, they see no better

better, and therefore must make the best, of that they see.

Let vs eate and drinke for to morow wee shall die, they haue made a couenant with hell and with death, they are at an agreement, they haue made a mocke at the councill of the LORD, and for Heauen it is but a dreame, and conscience a bug-bear: let vs haue the present, and take the future who list, depart from vs Lord we will not the knowledge of thy waies, our belly is our God and we will sacrifice to our net. Thus God appointing, the wicked are the choosers, and is God vnrighteous to giue them their desire?

I Cor. 15.
Esay. 28.
Psal. 9.

Iob. 21. 14

Self. 2.

But how shall the wicked bee confirmed in this choyce? how shall they blesse their soules and so harden themselues therein? do they not heare of a better within them? Do they not see a better before them? yes (beloued) *the conscience* tells them, that there is a better; in that it checks them in the best vse of the present: *Yea* their happinesse it selfe tells them that there is a better, as neither yeelding them any sound contentment while it is present, and taking it wings on the sudden, and flying away. *Yea* which is more fearefull, their heart leads them to the desire of a better. Oh that I may die the death of the righteous! how is it then that they will not vse the meanes thereto? how is it that seeing the better and approving the same, yet they follow the worse, and that with greedinesse too? surely the worke of the Lord is admirable herein and worthy to be sought out of all those that will secure their election, and especially wrought by the ministry of the conscience.

The wicked
how satisfied
herein.

I
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Ecd. 2.
Pro. 23.
3.

Num. 24

Obf. 8.

The con-
science Gods
executioner
in the con-
demnation of
the wicked.

Which being GODS *Agent* in the wicked to accomplish his will, *the more* it is reiecte the more it is enraged, and thereby prooues such an inward *hand-writing* to confound all their outward delights, that seeing they must now make the best of their miserable choise, therefore al the force shalbe bent to *corrupt* the conscience, y so they may enioy without controulement the benefit of their choyce:

hence

Self. 1.
The false rules
which the
wicked deuise
to iustifie their
actions.

Self. 2. How
they dull and
dead the con-
science
4. 1 phec. 19.

Self. 3.
The consci-
ence how and
when re-
mied in the
wicked.
Pro, 14. 13

hence it is that the right square beeing cast off, which is the word of GOD, false rules are deuised, to blinde the light of the conscience; *examples* are imbraced, and *multitude* is followed, *Time* becomes one rule and *Opinion* another, and to take downe the edge of it, that it may not cut at all, or else very dully, behold here they *plunge them-selues* deeper in sinne, and giue the bridle more freely vnto all iniquitie, that so they may dead the conscience and make it past feeling, which howsoever the wicked may attayne for a season, and in some measure be free from the checkes thereof, that so they may blesse them-selues in their choyce, and thereby make vp the measure of their sinne, Yet behold the iustice of God; when the haruest is ripe the sickle shall be put in, and who shall giue the onfet but the conscience that was thought to bee dead: This doe the wicked surely finde in each *temporall crosse*, and especially they drinke deepe of it *when death seazeth vpon them*: The *worme* that neuer dies beginnes with them in this life, yea in their laughter their *heart is sad*, and in the end of that mirth their is vnspcakable heauinesse.

1 Vse. Thus doth the Lord bring about the destruction of the wicked; and that especially by the ministry of the conscience: so vaine is it for them to resist the power thereof, so iustly they herein renounce their owne saluation in preferring credit or present safety before the gouernement of conscience. This was right the case of this miserable great one. And this is the case of the wicked of the world that are prepared to destruction, their conscience would retayne them but their credit sayes no, their securing for present happynesse excludes them the hope of eternall glory: and makes also their present happynesse to be most fearefull and miserable.

3 So *righteous* is the Lord in accomplishing of his will: so in-
4 excusable are the wicked concerning their owne dam-
5 nation. so powerfull is the conscience which is
6 slightly regarded; so mercifull is the LORD heereby

to

to teach his Children to count all things as dung in regard
of keeping faith and a good conscience,

But may not a good name and a good conscience stand
together, may not he be secure of the earth that secures
himselfe to heauen? *Is not Godlinesse* profitable aswell for
this life as the life to come? *Had not Salomon*, wisdoine
giuen him and riches to? *And if we* do first seeke the
Kingdome of heauen shall not all these things be cast vp-
on vs? *If we* preuaile with GOD shall we not preuaile
with men? *Are not the Children of GOD* of the best re-
port? *Is not wisdome* iustified of her Children? *Nay is not*
wisdome Iustified of her enemies? *Was not our Sauioir*
acquitted euen of those that condemned him? *And*
when the waies of man please the Lord will he not make
all his enemies at peace with him, yea surely if wee could
beleue we should be stablished, and if we seeke aright
we shall find the faithfulness of our GOD? had *Ahab-*
ners his Iudgement bin right he should haue here scene
no direct opposition betweene conscience and true credit:
but that as his conscience tould him that the decree might
haue beene reuersed, so it might also haue well stood euen
with his credit to.

For to examine this point a little in the Court of con-
science? Why might not this decree with good con-
science be reuersed? was it because it was a law of a migh-
ty Kingdome, the happinesse whereof depended vpon the
maintenance and obedience of good and wholesome
lawes?

Surely; though it cannot be denied but that such lawes
of Kingdomes ought not to be antiquated, which are ex-
positions of the morall law of GOD; and thereby en-
tend conscionable obedience thereto (such as the Gen-
tiles are directed from the light of Nature, by the bene-
fit whereof no doubt this *Persian Monarchy* had gairied
some) and to the Iewes were commended by the mouth
of GOD himselfe, and so from them conuied to the
Christians by the word of God; how soeuer I say they

may

Phil. 3. 8

Obfer. 9.

Conscience
and credit in
the Godly
go to geather.
1 Tim. 4. 8

1 Reg. 3. 1

Math. 6. 33

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Pro. 16

Obf. 10.

Lawes what
perpetuall &
how to bee
antiquated.

may not be altered because they proceed from an immutable ground, and concerne especially an eternall substance; yet other perticular lawes their are, concerning the times, persons, and diuers occasions of particular states, which depending onely thereon, are to determine therewith. Amonge which lawes seeing this was one, as instituted on a perticular occasion, and that neither warrantable, therefore in a double respect this might well haue bin abrogated, both in that the occasion thereof was mutable and so the law might be changed, and also being slight and vnsecmly was therefore in equity fit to be cancelled. What then should be the reason why this *Persian* state should be so peremptory for the eternizing of such lawes?

Sect. 3.
Worldlings
why earnest
for the eter-
nizing of
their lawes.

I

A&C. 12. 25.

Surely, it is not hard to conceiue the causes thereof, if we do vnderstand the nature and condition of these Kingdomes. Old *Adam* liues not in vaine in all his Children, he had a conceipt to be like vnto God, and this conceipt is the rather entertained of great Monarches because they are bewitched with the peoples acclamations, *the voice of God and not of man*: Herevpon that they might maintaine an opinion of this deity in the hearts of the people in the making of their lawes, they especially extended the same. Not onely, in ascribing the originall of their lawes to some *diuine power*, as if they had no beginning, but further also procuring hereby an opinion of eternity to them, that they shall stand for euer and not to be reuerfed, and all this to this blasphemous end that the lawes might be Aduocates to iustifie their deity, as being the daylie rules whereby their subiects were gouerned. From this conceipt of deity, proceeds vsually two effects 1. an opinion of *extraordinary wisdom*, and perfection, and from hence *unmeasurable pride* and *shamelesse insolency*, both which were also no meane occasions for the eternizing of their lawes. For what could giue greater imputation of wisdom vnto them, then to make such lawes that might endure for euer, what could be added more to their perfection then hereby to ascribe vnto them that they could not

erre

erre. Whereby they were not onely maintained in their pride, but further also hereby they became Maisters of their desires, not onely to yooke any of their subiects whom they ment to vnholse, but euen to *bridle the King* himselfe, and to make him a slave to their basenesse and ambition, as by this meanes taking the King at an aduantage, and thereby tying him (notwithstanding his after wit) to such inconueniences, as might not onely wound his conscience but empaire his credit too. This wee see here apparant in this *Persian* Monarch and the like: may we see in his predecessor *Darius*; that which they take to be their honour, turnes to their disgrace; because they preferred with *Sauus* rather to be honored before men, then to preferue a good conscience in the sight of God.

Vse 1. Wherein as we may see the iustice of God in taking the wicked in their owne Counsellis that so their glory becomes their shame: So we may behold on the contrary the great mercy of God vnto his Children that preferring a good conscience before their outward estimation in preserving of the one they obtaine the other. *Whereby* as the Children of GOD may reape sound comfort euen when they passe through euill report, that at least they shall finde more fauor, then he which flattereth with his lips: so it leaues a feareful brand vpon al reprobate *Sauus* that care more for the honor of men then the glory of God; that seeing God will honor those that honor him, therefore all their worldly credit shall turne to their confusion.

Which as it may lesson vs generally to discerne betweene things that differ and so wisely to present our conscience before our credit; so in the case of vower and promises it may be a good direction vnto vs, how farre we are bound to stand vnto them. Namely if they be such as are commanded of God, and do not exclude his ordinance, they are within the compass of our power & greivable to our callings; if they be not forced from vs, but proceed from a willing minde, and tend not to the annihilating of our Christian liberty, but still abide in word,

Lastly

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Dani. 6.

1. Sam. 16.

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Pro. 18.

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1. Sam. 17.

Obser. 11.

Vowes and

promises

what and

how to bee

kept.

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Lastly if we haue power of our selues to make such promises, as not being vnder the tuition of others, then such vowes and promises are most lawfull and do bind vs, yea though it tend to our owne hinderance.

Isa. 15.

Use 1. Which as it condemneth all popish vowes and such like rules as neither being of things commanded but contrarying the same; neither being in our power notwithstanding with Christian liberty, but being merely forced and contrary to our callings: So it also reprobeth all such rash and forced covenants and promises, which either being forced by our passion; or others threatnings, are not therefore to stand, because the ground was not voluntary.

1. Popish vowes condemned.
2. Also rash and forced promises.

David 1.
Sam. 24.

3. To be broken.

And therefore as the Saints of God, haue wisely broken such oathes and rash promises, so may we lawfully refuse to stand to such covenants, not vsing our liberty herein as a cloake of maliciousnesse, or deceit, but endeavoring in all things to keepe a good conscience; and so wisely deliuering our selues from the snares of the wicked, who if they haue so catcht vs that by the law we are bound, then let vs follow the Councell of the wise man, *humble we our selues*, sollicite we our friends, and giue no rest to our bones till we haue deliuered our selues as a Doe from the hand of the Hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the

And how.

Fro. 7.1.

4. How to be prevented.

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Fowler; And that being warned we may the better be armed, that we may prevent such cunning en-snaring. *Let vs not be servants of men, nor slaves to our lusts, keepe wee watch before our tongue, and a compasse according to our callings, shake wee truth from our hearts and labour wee sincerity in all our actions. Lastly to our doue-like simplicity ioine we spirituall wisdom, so shall we auoide the snare of the Hunter, we shall not be en-snared with the words of our owne mouth;*

Obser. 12.
The sovereignty of conscience.

Lastly whereas the King though he hath a Law to cleare him, and a whole world to defend him; yet notwithstanding his conscience doth most righteously condemne him, herein we may behold the *soveraignty of conscience*, which if it stand with vs, we need not feare who

is againſt vs, if it only plead againſt vs, what will all the world aduantage vs?

1. *Uſe*. Whereby we may learne *as to feare* in our greateſt outward ſafety, if the conſcience be not quieted; ſo on the contrary to be *moſt ſecure* in the greateſt danger, becauſe the ſpirit of a man will beare his infirmitie. And therefore *as we* are to preferre the peace of our conſciences aboue all the world, *ſo* we are to labour the procuring thereof though with the loſſe of all, as knowing that in the peace of a good conſcience wee haue a *right* in all, and by the ſame ſhall haue that *to uſe* which ſhall bee better then great riches of the vngodly, ſo keeping our conſciences vnſpotted of the world, we *ſhall be free* from the danger thereof, and hauing boldneſſe *before God* in the peace thereof, we ſhal not need to runne to the world for a plaſter to heale it ſoars.

This the Spirit of God ſettes downe to be the caſe of *Ahaſueruſh*; his conſcience ſo woundes him that he muſt needes haue helpe, and inſteed of ſuch meanes which might haue brought him to repentance, his ſeruants aduiſe him for ſuch as in truth tend eſpecially to the increaſe of his ſinne.

(Here what they ſay) *Then ſaid the ſeruants of the King that miſtred vnto him: Let them ſecke for the King beautifull maidens &c.*

Lette vs drowne him againe in pleaſure to driue away melancholly, that ſo hee may remember his iniquitie no more; and ſerue our turnes: *ſuch* miſerable comforts are carnall Phiſitions: *ſo* wretched is our nature to indure no other Phyſicke: *ſo* iuſtly doth God fit the Phyſition to ſo patient: *ſo* doth the wicked helpe each other forward to their deſerued wages. *So* doth the LORD threaten that there ſhall be like Prieſt like people, *ſo* are Gods iudgements moſt righteous againſt them; when that by them is done in the hight of their wiſdome which ſo Lord hath appointed as the only meanes of their deſtruction.

Wherin we may behold as a ſpecial office of Courtiers,

F

Namely

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Prouer. 18.

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Obſ. 13.
The wicked
in the troubles
of conſcience
runne to the
world & car-
nall helpe.
Velle, &c.

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Obf. 14.
Courtiers
plunge their
Princes in
pleasure.

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Jeremy. 8. 10

The wound
ded conscience
how to be re-
lected.

Jeremy. 13.
Plal. 52. 5.
Jeremy. 3. 36.
Hebr. 10. 21.
Peters. 1. 5.
2. hill.
Ephes. 6.

Verse. 4.

Obf. 15.

Second mar-
riage not vn-
lawfull.

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Namely to bee brokers to the lusts of wicked Princes
ces, so herein also their diuelish pollicy, Namely to plunge
their Princes in pleasure, vppon pretence of easing their
shoulders of vnnecessary affaires; that so corrupting their
consciencies they both may rule them as they list, and
yet by their example iustifie them-selues. And doth
not the admirable iustice of God appeare most liuely
heerin, that as by this meanes, Princes are more deeply
drowned in all iniquitie, so they are more enraged and
possessed with ieaousie, and so vsually strike those that
stand next to them: Or if by Gods mercy they are at
length reclaimed, who must be the sacrifices to appease
the people, and purge the land in this case? Who must
pay for their errors but these that haue bene the bellows
to set all on fire?

Vse. A notable lesson for all Christians that they daub
not vp sinne with such vntempered morter, neither run-
ning to company to driue away melancholly, nor falling
to gaming and such like vaine helps.

But that beeing wounded with sinne, they goe to
the true Phisitian for the curing thereof, and so vse
the right meanes which hee hath prescribed. Namely
to, 1. know their iniquity, and 2. acknowledge the same
with griefe, so to bee 3. humbled there-with, as withall 4.
to sigh for pardon, and 5. to beg the same instantly at the
throne of grace; 6. offering holy vowes neuer to commit
the like again; and 7. watching ouer them-selues by holy
feare, and 8. soberly, that so they may stand fast in the day
of temptation. But let vs examine the best in their offer:
Namely that the King may haue another spouse for so it is
said: *That there may raigne instead of Vahity.* A matter very
equal, that y King should haue a comforter, and the *light of*
nature here taught these prophane men, y, euen a second
wife was not altogether vnlawfull: and seeing the same
reasons why we should marry one, may also be in force to
marry another. Namely, that wee may haue the comfort
of sweete society; see the fruite of our body and auoyd
fornication.

fornication, I see not, but the thing being simply lawfull to marry a wife, we may find euen all these blessings as well in the second as in a former choice: Nay if we shal consider that experience teacheth wisdom, why may I not hope to haue more comfort in my second choice then I haue had in my first.

1st 1. And therefore howsoeuer this liberty may be the occasion of some euill dealing against the wife, (which hath bin the occasion why some haue bene straight euen in iust causes to allow of diuorce) & though this liberty be not indeed to be taken of euery one, but of those especially that may increafe so the Church of God therby, yet seeing we haue the examples of the holy men of God for our warrant, & the word also doth not simply forbid the same, but by a consequent doth plainly allow it: I see not but this liberty may bee lawfully practised among Christians, obseruing no other conditions then are required in the former marriage.

That which is added concerning the speciall quality of the wife that must be chosen, *That she must be picked out of the most beautifull Virgins*, as if beauty were the best marke to guide the eye in the choice of a wife: this as in it selfe is more liable to reproofe, so, though otherwise not to be neglected, Yet now in conscience should least haue bin intended, because beauty was the occasion of the former sinne. And surely hereby do the Children of God best testifie their repentance when they dread the fire that hath so scorcht them, and auoide such occasions as haue bin fuel to their sinne. But what do I speake of repentance to this King and his Courtiers? heres no sinne acknowledged, and therefore can we looke for any auoyding the like occasions? No, no, their sinne is their happines, and therefore when \S former wood is spent, what should they do but cast on more to maintaine the flame: thus beauty must stil be supplied to maintaine lust. *Let them seeke beautifull Virgins*. Say these ioylie courtiers both shewing therein their chiefest aime, & not being ignorant what would please \S King.

1 Tim. 5.

Obs. 16.
Beauty warily
to be proposed
in the
choice of a
wife.

Obs. 17.
Godly auoide
such occasions
as haue
enticed them
to sinne.

Obs. 18.
Prophane
courtiers ready
to satiate
the lusts of
their Princes.

Vse. 1 Oh that wee could bee so wise to take notice what would please the King of heauen, as these carnall wretches are to serue the honour of this earthly Monarch, *that* wee could so further one another in the way to happiness, as the wicked are skilful to fit each others turne to hell, *that* we could see our owne weaknesse to be humbled therewith, as the wicked fit each others corruption to the strengthening thereof, *that* wee could so know our owne strength to be resolute against sinne, as the wicked know each others weakenesse to help forward to euil: Surely if we do not, these Courtiers shall condemne vs: their wisdom in sinne, our folly to goodnesse.

Obs. 19.

The best gifts
of the wicked
tend to their
destruction.

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Let them seeke for the King beautifull Virgins; wel fare then deformitie, for beauty brings bondage: here's no seeking for soule ones, the faire must serue the Court; So doe the best giftes of the wicked tend to their destruction, and no maruaile: *For* as they are giuen of God in anger and not in mercy, *so* they are desired of the wicked, for they though seeming good, yet indeed are for true hurt & destruction. *And therefore* as they occasion the wicked to rest vpon them: *so* because these will serue the turne, for their present vse of the world, therefore they will not seeke after durable riches: VVhereby they proue also meanes to puffe them vp: And so they grow intolent ouer others, and secure of their owne estate. By which meanes sacrificing to their nets, and making y^e wedge of gold their hope, they become also *snar*es and stumbling blockes to them and others, and so both hasten and increase their damnation.

Pag. 132.

That which wee may learne heere is partly touched beefore. But heere to we may adde these publike lessons.

2

1 *Vse.* Namely *as* to condemne the world for respecting men extraordinarily, only for these thinges: *so* much the rather for excluding by these the more excellent blessings, as if so be religion were enemy to pollicy, and sound holiness would not worke true subiection.

3

And seeing indeed these are common to all, & are rather portions

portions cast vpon the wicked to their greater condemnation: Therefore lette vs not be discouraged if wee are scanted of them, but rather lette vs seek after durable riches. Let vs not take paines and lay out our money vpon things of no value, but rather let them that thirst come to the waters and buy without money, as being assured, that if wee choose the better part we shal not want the complement, these outward things shal be cast into the reckoning. This shal be wisdom, riches, honour and all vnto vs.

Thus farre of the quallitie by which this wife must bee chosen: shee must bee beautifull, the best pearle in a carnall eye.

But where shall we seeke for this beautifull wife? Hearken what these Ministers aduise in this point, must we fetch her from other countries that differ in manners and religion from vs? No say these Counsellors.

Let the King appoint officers throughout all the Prouinces of the Kingdome, and let the gather all the yong beautifull Virgins into the Palace of Sushan into the house of the womē vnder the hand of Hege the Kings Eunuch, keeper of the women to giue them their things for purification. Verſe, 3.

And the maid that shall please the King let her raigne in ſteed of Vaſhtie. Verſe, 4.

This you see is the summe of their counsell, why this wife should bee chosen, and it may bee drawne to these heades.

1 Because it is a matter of state, therefore it must be done in state; Officers must be appointed (happily a new) and for a season onely for this worke, that so it may be done in order and decencie

2 These Officers as they must not exceed the boundes of the Kingdome, so their commission is large, the whole kingdome is their circuit.

3 Though there be but one to be chosen, yet all the beautifull Virgins in the Kingdome must be sought out and gathered together, that so of them all this choyce of one may be made.

4. They must be brought to the place of Sushan, neere the hand of the chiefe Keeper of the women; that so they may be sure for starting away, or at least loose the crowne and pride of their reioicing.

5. They must haue *things giuen them* for their purification, that they must be trained vp to the fashion and manners of the Court, and they must be fitted here to the state and lust of the Prince &c.

These are the particulers of this prudent Counsell. Now let vs examine the equitie thereof.

Obs. 20.

Matters of
state to be car-
ried with
complement

And surely that matters of state should be carried in state, and affaires of Princes ought to haue complement accordingly: So that howsoever they differ from common men, yet this may stand with their lawfull libertie; both their *calling* doth require it, and their *meanes* will allow; and who may better be employed herein then the subiect; who fitter then *Abrahams* seruant to procure a wife for his Maisters sonne?

Genel. 4.

Onely obserue wee that the complement of state bee no no cloak to sin, nor countenance to secret wickednes. 2. y^e matter they are imploied in be answerable to their seruice & the state whom it doth concerne, and 3. that the end be holy & profitable to the church and comō wealth: which as it condēneth the imploimēt of many vnecessary officers to base & vnseemly seruices toward prophāe princes, whē the subiect is taken vp for satisfying priuat lusts: so it is a good lesson to christiā princes, y^e though thei haue the lawfull cōmand of the bodies & good of their subiects, not to make them drudges to euery base seruice, but if the iust man bee merciful to his beast, then surely ought they much more to be respectiue of man, as much concerning their glory & their safety too, but of this point more largely anon. Nay if we consider y^e compasse of their commission y^e they must not exceed the limits of the Kingdome; surely herein they aduise not amiss.

Vas. 16.7.

For seeing in y^e choyce of a wife we should especially respect similitude of time, which is best discerned by agreement

agreement in the same religion, correspondency in man-
ners, and conformity to our guise, and laudable fashion: *Obs. 8.*
was not his owne country likeliest to afford these, and where a wife
was it not therefore fit to make his choyse here? To make to be chosen
him great and strong by forraine alliance, to vnite di- whether at
uers nations by this meanes together: As this is not the home in our
fashion of Tirants, whose greatnesse riseth by the sword owne country
or abroad,
or trechery, so indeed Christian Princes are to be wise
herein least *while* that they seeke for greatnesse they loose
goodnesse, *while* they labour to be strong abroad they
weaken not them-selues at home, and *while* by forraine
matches they may intend vnity, it proue not occasion
both of intestine and forraine dissentions. And therefore
though in this case, it is good to leaue great ones to this
liberty, which they will take and aske their inferiors no
leauē, yet I would haue them also wisely to consider with-
all, that a little well knit together by loue, is better then
a great deale scattred, and at the best linked together with
vnequall bond, And therefore whether their owne king-
dome may not afford such matches, as what they want
in greatnesse may be supplied but in faithfull loue, and
ioyne that mutual fellowship which cannot be had in for-
raine matches. But what needs all this: are we not now in
Persia? heathen examples must not be absolute presidents;
they can offend enough at home though they choose
not their wiues abroad.

Else what need all the beautifull virgins to be gathe-
red to Sushan. The King would haue but one and *Obs. 22.*
therefore what neede so many hundreds? And though Tyrants how
he might shew his power, thus to ingrosse beauty to him they reuell in
selfe, because if he commanded who durst deny: yet the goods and
bodies of their
surely this must needs turne to great greefe and discon-
tentment of his subiects, thus to bee deprived of the
staves of their age, and also much frustrate the end which
he proposed therein, namely out of those many to make
choyce of one. For if the eye be neuer satisfied with seeing,
and among so many like objects the minde must needs be
distracted; how shall he grow to a resolution which shall

be she, that in his choice is only led by such a rule as makes no difference betweene the one and the other vnlesse we wil say y out of this multitude he ment to chose more then one, though not for his wife yet to supplie the number of his concubines and wandring. *Dinah* (traying so farre from home might be good meat for courtiers (remember I pray you we are yet in Persia,) groser fare wil serue them: whatsoeuer it is, we may here behold y miserable slauery of such as line vnder Godles Princes, the best that they haue must serue y Tirants lust, there seruants must be his bauds & her daughters his harlots. Beloued, their odious liues and that which is deerer his harlots their ritches, their liberty y dearest of all their soules & consciences, these must be prostituted to the lust of wicked Princes. So blasphemously do they exalt themselues hourlye aboue al that is called God. So iust is the Lord to satiate the wicked with their owne waies: that forsake him to be ruled like other nations. So wisely doth he make the wicked hereby rods to punish each other. That as the insolence of Princes punisheth the Idolatry of the subiect, so the rage of the subiect shall punish the Idolatry of the Prince.

a Sam. 8

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3
Pro. 14
1 Sam. 8

Princes how
to command
their subiects.

3

Rom. 8. 17.

Vse 1. Which though it be no warrant to cast of the yoake of government, because the wicked abuse the same: Yet it is a good lesson for Princes not vniuently to greue the subiect by abusing vnnecessarily their authority ouer them, as knowing that howsoeuer their bodies and goods are theirs at command, yet it is in the Lord, his glory for & the publique good. And subiects also may here take out that lesson, as principally to beare the Lords yoake, that so the yoake of man may be easie vpon the; and to vse these outward comforts soberly y so for the they may not be a prey to the wicked, so to be patient euen vnder a whip of scorpions; as knowing that all this is of the Lord, he it is that bridles the rage of the most barbarous, & vnreasonable; he in his good time will giue a gracious issue; and in the meane time all things shall turne vnto their goods.

4. In

4 In that these Virgins must be brought into the palace of *Sathan* and as it were clapt vnder hatches, vnder the custodie of the *Eunuch* that had the charge of the women, the misery hereof beeing such as ought not to bee named among Christians I spare therefore to search- ing therevnto.

Onely consider wee the power of *Sathan* in these Children of vnbeleefe that as it was counted a great honor among those vassalls of *Sathan*, to offer vp the soules and bodies of their daughters in fire vnto the diuill; so to prostitute the chastity also of their Virgins to the lust of their Priests, as if it were a sacrifice most acceptable to their supposed Gods. Wherevpon also it came to passe that as their Princes affected a kind of deity herein to haue the spoile of the Virgins chastity, to be a cloake to colour their lust, so it was no small honour accounted euen to these to become the Paramours to so mighty Monarchies.

Use Which as it doth apparantly iustifie the righteous vengeance of God against Idolators that they shall account that their greatest honor which brings both ceraine infamy in this life and eternall condemnation in the other life. So we shall see that the diuell is not dead, if we consider a like power of *Satan* not onely among Papists where this sinne is maintained; yea worse iustified by Papall priueledge: But, which (I shame to speake) euen among the professors of the Gospell themselues, among whome drunkenesse is counted good fellowshippe and vncleane man-hood, whoreing faces it with priueledge, and all iniquity hath gotten to the vpper hand.

Well the Virgins are thus appointed to be brought to *Susan*: here must they now be prepared and fashioned to the Court. They aduise is. *They must haue things giuen them for purification.*

That is such things as might both serue to cleanse natures infirmities, and also might set out nature more gloriously to the satisfaction of the lust of the eye, wherein that

meanes

Obser. 23.
The confusi-
on of Idola-
try and car-
nall wildomns.

Solemnity

1 Tim. 3

Obser. 24.
Natures in-
firmities to be
cleansed and
abstinence to
be vsed there-
in.

Deu. 21.

meanes are vsed to heale Natures sickenes: This in it selfe is a most lawfull thing *as* both commanded by God, in a most precise manner and *tending* much to the health of both parties, in that the disease is not without his infection.

1

2

3

4

1. Ioh. 3. 3.

Vse. 1. Which as it condemneth the practise of those worse then brutish natures that runne together at all times without respect of natures preuelidge. *so* also this very cleansing shall be a heauy witness against those gentiles, yea against all such in generall that are thus precise to cleanse the infirmities of the body, and yet neuer regard the purging of the soule. And therefore the best of vs may take out lessons very profitable hereby, namely by the infirmities of the body to be put in mind of the blemishes of the soule, and in the necessity and benefit of releueing the one, to labour also the releasing of the other. And seeing such care there was of purifying, that these virgins might please an earthly King, how ought we to purge our selues, that we may appeare before the Lord Iesus? surely he that hath this hope will purge him-selfe, and to whome the arme of the Lord shall reueale these things. As for the wicked it is not so with them: they make cleane the out side, to the further defying of the inward man, and this is that for which this purification is iustly faulted, because it was to prouoke the lust of a Tyrant.

Obse. 25.
Our landish
fashions vn
lawfull.

And surely if we consider the other manners of this purification which was to set our nature more gloriously to the bewitching of the eye by some painting or new-fangled attire. This also was most prophane and preposstrous. For if the exornation were by some strange and antique attire not agreeable to sobriety or the garish fashion of the country; this the Lord him-selfe condemnes and doth threaten that he will visit such as are clothed with strange apparrell.

Obser. 26.
Painting of
women vn
lawfull.

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2

If it be by painting y^e visage or such like hypocrisie; *this* surely, as it discouer notorious prides not to be contented with what God hath giuen, but rather to find fault, yea to go about to correct the workmanship of God; *so* it beraies our folly y^e hereby we reproch Nature, while we seeke to hono

r
it

it, and so disfigure and alter our hue, *that* God when hee comes to iudgement shal not know his owne creature: *besides* what a snare and *viser* it is to intangle? what a bait to intrap, and cloak to hide this sin: I would the shame thereof did not proclaime in our eares.

3
Cyprian.
4

1 Vse. Wel let vs Court, and Citty-dames learn here instruction, & let al take heed of the like hipocrisie, least seeming to be y^e which they are not; they proue only what they seeme, & so deceiuing others, at length deceiue themselves.

2 Tim. 3.

Thus far of the counsell that these yongsters giue their Soueraigne: What? now hee is not ashamed of such counsellors? No sure he was al on fire with lust, and therefore he cares not who powres in oyle thereto: and who fitter for such an occasion then young heads. Such *Reboboams* are *Obf. 27.* Princes to be ledde by yong Counsellors, because as they haue *lesse knowledge*, and therefore may be ouer-reached of their Prince, so they haue *lesse courage*, and so are fitter to be ouer-ruled by him, and which is the maine, *they* are lesse fetled in their affections, and therefore most likely to aduize rather for pleasure then profit. *Vse 1.* A notable lesson for *Princes* that they follow not young heads, but rather to *distrust* themselves when such stand before them; *procur*ing such as are graue & fetled in their affections, as may crosse the in their lusts, rather then giue allowance therto.

Young heades
fit to giue
counsell to ti-
rants and god-
lesse Princes.

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2
3
2
3

But here you see like King, like Counsellors, they no sooner aduize, but he presently assents to it, so saith the spirit.

This pleased the King and he did so: It is a true prouerb: They must needs go that the diuell driues, here's more hast then good speed; no sooner spoken but approued presently, no sooner approued, but presently executed.

Obf. 28.
Sin impatient
of delay.

Behold *the impotencie and impatience of sinne*, it admitts no reasoning to dissuade the sinne, it indures no delays *least* it should happily bee frustrated, so cunning is Satan to follow them, so madde vpon vs is our corrupt nature.

1
2
3

Whereby

Seet. 1.

1
Sinne how to
be preuented

2
2

Seet. 2.

The motions
of Gods spirit
how to be in-
certained.

1
2
3
4

Obs. 25.

The prophane
guile of effe-
minate Prin-
ces.

2
3

Vase. 5.

1 Vse. wherby we may learne how to preuent sin, if temp-
tation assault demur vpon it wisely, and so thou shalt happily
confound the same: if it yet be importunate delay the execu-
tion by auoyding the opportunitie and occasions thereof, &
so thou maist graciously quench the rage of the same.

And seeing the wicked are so forward to put euill moti-
ons in practise, Oh be thou as ready to entertaine the good
motions of Gods blessed Spirit: Esteeme of them highly, and
imbrace them readily, practise them cheerefully and returne
the strength to the giuer: so shalt thou cherish the spirite of
God, and by the meanes thereof attaine a perfection.

Well thus you heare the King is pleased; And with what
I pray you? Surely that, here's more fuell preparing for his
lust, that hee may lengthen out his dayes in dalliance and
wantonnesse. *The ordinary state of these Persian Mo-
narches* rather to liue in a chamber making loue Ballads to
their Minions, then to meete the enimie in the gate: *their*
belly was their God, and their gluttony must needs haue
vent, *their* eyes full of adultery and soule fraught with filthi-
nesse, and therefore no maruaile if the body must beare the
burthen and serue as a weapon of all vnrighteousnesse.

A notable president for Christian Princes to possesse their
vessels in holynesse and honour, not suffering the stranger to
deuoure their strength, nor exposing their posteritie to cur-
sing and dishonour, but to be carefull of chastitie in them-
selues, So to banish the occasions thereof from their Courts,
as idlenesse, filthy dancing, vaine stage-plaies &c. And to
see the Lawes seuerely executed against this sin, least the
stranger indeed doe deuoure their strength; and as they
tooke it of the hyre of an harlot, so they shall returne to the
wages of an harlot.

But he that is filthie will be filthie still. The King is plea-
sed, and he puts his desire in execution.

Now let vs further consider how God is pleased herein.
What light bringes hee out of this darknesse? What waile
makes he hereby for the deliuerance of his Church?

In the Citie of Shushan there was a certaine Jew whose
name

name was Mordecai the sonne of Shimei. &c.

In these few next verses the holy Ghost sets downe such meanes whereby *Hester* is aduanced to the Court, as shew their grounds and reference to others. And they are of two sorts.

The first is her preservation and education, being for an orphan captiue, and so more extraordinarily plunged in affliction, and thereby more extraordinarily cast vpon the prouidence of God: who as he vsually worketh by meanes, so he prouides a kins-man to become his tutor and nourisher, and such a kins-man who as he was partaker with her, in her humiliation should also be partaker with her of her aduancement.

This kins-man therefore is here described at large, by his habitation he dwelt in *Sushan*; secondly by his Country he was a Jew, 3. by his name he is called *Mordicai*. 4. by his pedigree he was of the tribe of * *Beniamin* where also his descent is remembred; the sonne of *Iair*, the sonne of *Shimei* the sonne of *Kish* &c. vers. 5.

* Bitter contrition.

5. He is described vnto vs by his outward condition, namely that he was borne in the captiuitie, which the holy Ghost necessarily implieth when speaking in the 5. verse. of his father *Kish*, He it was (saith the spirit), which had bin carried away from *Ierusalem* with the captiuitie that was carried away with *Ieconiah King of Iuda*, whom *Nebuchadnezzar King of Babel* had carried away, vers. 6. Wherepon it must needs follow that *Mordecai* was not carried away in the captiuitie, but his father *Kish*. And so the worke of GOD herein appeeres more admirable, that one man borne in the captiuitie should not onely be gardian to his cousin, left fatherlesse and comfortlesse, who in all likely-hood might need of such helpe himselfe, but that both these being in such a desperate condicion, should be so highly aduanced in the land of their captiuitie.

Now that by this verse, *Kish* the father must be ment, and not *Mordecai* the sonne. I take it is more then probable.

Obfer. 30.
Mordecai was
not caried a-
way in the
captiuitie.

Wic. 7. 15.

Scripture not
to be strained.

1. Because men at this time vsually attained not to halfe those yeares (for lewish conceits paffe them not) as of necessity *Mordecai* must now be of, if he were one that was caried away in the aforesaid captiuitie.

2. The text it selfe doth seeme to resolue the matter where it makes this *Mordecai* cousin-german to *Hester*, as being the daughter of *Abihail* who was *Mordecaies* Vnkle. Now among, i. cousins as there is vsually much likeli-hood of yeares, so there could not here be such difference as that *Mordecai* in any wise could be of that captiuitie.

3 And what need we serch the scripture vpon the authors of lewish fables and vnecessary supposals; seeing granting that there might be diuers men of that same name, one succeeding another within generations, which is neither contrary to the chronology of the story, nor the Anology of faith, both the scripture is iustified in it literall exposition, which we are to cleaue vnto, when no false-hood or absurdity followeth, and there-vpon all this controuersie is happily ended?

So then we will take him for *Hesters* kins-man and indeed he performeth the part of a kins-man vnto her, as here in the verse is described. *He nourished Hester who was the daughter of his vnkle*, and the holy Ghost giueth a fourefold reason of it, *One from the bond of affinity*, she was his vnkles daughter, and therefore by the rule of nature he was tied to nourish her. Secondly from her miserable condition, *she had neither father nor mother*, and therefore, she had need of such a gardian: and that we may see the providence of the Lord, in the tempering of his Childrens misery, that there shalbe somewhat euen therein not onely to moue to compassion, but to giue hope of repentance, or else at least to make misery greuous: behold *another reason* is added.

2 Namely the *maide was faire and beautifull to looke*
3 *on*, and *therer, on followeth a fourth reason*: why hee did nourish her, drawne from his owne conscience and holy

holy affection, Namely that *after the death of her father and mother he took her for his owne daughter*; that is he not only adopted her to be his Child, as by the rule of conscience he was bound, but further also as his Child did most tenderly and fatherly traine her vp, as his loue did guide him and her condition did require, having also likely some portion from her friends, the rather to induce him thereto: and that may be a sixt circumstance in the description of *Mordecai*. Namely from the vprightnesse of his conscience and conuersation in loue: and this is the first meanes here set downe of *Hesters* advancement.

Wherefore, that first this *Mordecai* was planted in *Sushan*, not in any out or obscure corner of the Kingdome, farre from notice and so from preferment, but hauing his abode in the Imperiall Cittie, whereas there wanted no meanes to corrupt, so there wanted not also meanes for imployment and advancement, according to the fitnessse, and forwardnesse of men thereto; herein wee may behold, the admirable providence of GOD, not onely, in keeping this his seruant and his Nephew vndefiled in such a sinke of wickednesse, but hereby also making a neerer cut by the advancement of these, for the deliuerance of his Church.

And surely that *Mordecai* is resident in *Susis*; that *Susis* hath a *Mordecai* to keepe out the wrath of GOD, and that *Mordecai* dwells in *Susis* not subject to Gods wrath, as being kept from partaking with them in their abominations, herein doth appeere two admirable acts of the diuine providence.

The one of his generall providence to the wicked, that when he will lengthen out temporall blessings vnto them, and beare with longer patience such vessels appointed to wrath, yet that they may see it is not for their sakes, therefore hee plants among them some *Lot* or *Mordecaies*, either to bridle their sinne by their example, that so they may be fit for longer prosperitie and

Obser. 31.
Gods Providence in planting his children fit for his glory and their good.

Obf. 32.
The providence of God in planting of the Godly among the wicked.

and thereby flatters themselues in a vaine happinesse ; or
 4 els to pluck some out of the fire that they may auoide
 the vengeance to come , that so the decree of GOD be-
 5 ing furthered in adding to the Church , such as shalbe
 iaued, the poore Church growing more visibler , might
 6 haue some rest and shelter among the wicked , for the ius-
 tyfying thereof euen in the sight of it enemies, when Christ
 shall raigne euen in the midst of them . And the wicked
 hereby being conuincd and so ripened to their destru-
 7 ction, Gods Children may be also furthered and ripened to
 their perfection : and so beeing fit for beauty and pro-
 sperity they may enuy the same, not so much by their
 owne care and industry, lest they should boast of them-
 selues as by the admirable prouidence of GOD making
 their enemies their puruayers , who though they heape
 8 vp siluer as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay , yet
 Iob. 26. 16. 17 they may prepare it and the wise shall put it on , and the
 innocent shall diuide the siluer.

I Where we may learne as to leaue it to Gods prou-
 idence concerning our abiding, because we are in his hands
 to dispose at his pleasure, and therefore neither to plot
 2 for our planting in *Sushans*, nor to murmur at our *Lot* in
 3 *Sodome*, so for the changing of our habitations, to rest
 vpon the vnchangeablenesse of that prouidence, who if he
 takes vs out of *Canaan* and plant vs in *Egipt*, where wee
 would or should not be, yet it is the will of our glorious
 GOD and therefore must not be gain-said, and shall
 serue in the end to our exceeding good : and there-
 fore that this may turne indeede to our good, Let
 vs take it a part of our humiliation that we dwell
 in *Mesech*, to be humbled for our sinne , and yet let vs
 account it a part of Gods mercy towards vs , that we are
 remoued from *Canaan* to *Egipt*: because *Egipt* shall
 Pls. 120. nourish vs, when *Canaan* cannot, and *Egipt* also shall
 fare the better for vs, that we may be honoured, onely let
 vs be carefull that we fare not the worse for it: Though
Israel play the harlot yet let not *Iudah* sinne: gleane we
 the

Obs. 23.
 Why God
 remoues out
 of their Ha-
 bitations.

the good of Egypt, but partake not with her in her euill : Lette vs labour if we can to make *Sodome* better, but at no hand lette *Sodome* make vs worse : Humble wee & flesh by greewing at *Sodome*, and prouoke we the flesh by crossing *Haman*, so the increase of their rage shal increase our faith; and their plots against vs, shall ripen their sinne, that is, their fall may be our raising vp, and the place of sorrow may be the crowne of our glory. Thus did God prouide for *Mordecai* by planting him in *Susis*.

But was it possible that *Susis* did not corrupt *Mordecai*? Could *Ioseph* liue in *Egypt* and not sweare by the life of *Pharaoh*? Did *Moses* leaue *Pharaohs* Court because he would not inioy the pleasures of sinne for a season?

Behold here an act of Gods speciall providence *Mordecai* shall bee in *Susis* and yet be vndefiled: Gods children shall dwell with the wicked and yet keepe their sincerity; Else how should they know that their sinceritie is from him; that the beginning and continuance thereof is from his mercy; he that giues it without meanes can keep it contrary to meanes, and therefore neither the terrour, nor flattery, nor the example, nor fellowship of the *Sodomites* shall corrupt righteous *Lot*, because the Lord is the giuer & keeper of righteousness: & where the Lord keeps, contrary meanes shall further: great cold without shall cause more heate within; and the greater wickednesse of others shall make vs both discern and approue better the righteousness that is in vs: Yea wee shall hold it the faster by how much the more the wicked would plucke it from vs: as more feareing our selues and more earnestly crauing the helpe of God. And so growing more resolute and constant in godlynesse, wee shall finde more comfort and benefit therein, not onely that our enemies heereby will bee wearied and so yeeld vp the bucklers, but our righteousness beeing iustified euen by our enemies, & they being hereby inwardly confounded as they are prepared to their vtter subuersion: so we shall gather the fruite of such *Trees* which they haue planted.

And therefore howsoeuer wee should rather choose to

Obfer. 34.
The godly
best company
and why?

1 Cor. 5.

Obf. 35.

Why we may
conuerse with
the wicked
and how.

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1

2

3

Obfer. 36.
God giues his
faueur in the
eyes of the
wicked.

conuerse with the godly, because *they* most please God, and best suit with our affections, they are traouelling our way, and so shall best further vs to happinesse, *they* onely are safe company, and who yeeld true comfort: Yet seeing we must go out of the world if we will not meddle with the wicked; and we are bound to make others better, without feare of making our selues worse: and God will try vs whether we do good of conscience or not: and *ſ* world must haue a stumbling-block euen by our liberty herein: therefore though we are not purposely to come into euil company, or principally to make choice of them, yet if God do *call vs* we are not to refuse, because his commandement is our sufficient warrant; if God cast vs vpon them we cannot choose; and then his prouidence is our protection. Nay if *they* *seek vnto vs* in their extremity wee may not deny them, for the holt haue no need of the Phisitian but the sicke. Nay we are to seek them out if they be gon astray & so to ouercome them with our loue & industry. So shall they return vnto vs, & not wee vnto them: Gods power shal be seen in *ſ* land of *Goshen*, and the righteousness of his Saints shal haue a glorious trial, whē it is iustificed & desired by *ſ* enemies therof: thus was *Mordecai* safe in *Shusan*. But how comes it to passe *ſ* he is planted in *Shusan*: the reason hereof the holy Ghost deliuers afterward: namely he was called to the Kings household, & made keeper of the Court gate (as chief porter & keeper of the Pallace) w^{ch} pallace requiring his continual attendance and the Court being vsually at *Shusan*; therefore he is said to be in the citie of *Shusan*. And surely herein also the prouidence of the Almighty is no lesse wonderfull thus to prouide for his seruant, in the land of his Captiuitie, that he findes such fauor with the Prince as to be admitted to his seruice, and that to a place of such trust & imployment, w^{ch} may wel giue testimony of his loyalty and diligence, as also prepare a way to his further aduancement. Thus hath God giuen his children fauor in the greatest of their troubles, euen with those that are Gods speciall instruments for their greater affliction.

Thus

Thus was *Ioseph* gracious : Wherefoeuer hee came, Genes. 39.
 his maister highly affects him wholly, hee was in his fa-
 milie when he was in the prison, he winnes the Taylors Genes. 40.
 fauor, when hee is out of prison, *Pharoh* himselfe sets 41.
 his heart vpon him, yea he found fauor in the sight euen of 42.
 all the Egyptians, who in likelyhood must needes enuy &c.
 his greatnesse and practise against him. But what shall
 we say? This is the *Lords doing* to turne the hearts of
 our enemies: *The power of godlinesse* is such, as some-
 times to *raush* at: and God wil haue both the wicked left Ver. 16. 17.
inexcusable hereby, and his the *better secured* by the same: 3
 as hauing a friend in the Court so gracious with the grea- 4
 test: who at the best are but seruants to further the cause
 of the Church.

1 *Vse*. And therefore though seruice of princes bee
 no inheritance, and their fauor (as them-selues) par-
 tiall and mutable: and so not ambitiously or corruptly
 to be bought or begd of vs, yet neither must we neglect
 to demerite the same by all lawfull obedience: nor if it
 be cast vpon vs, proudly to reiect it, as being both a true
 note that wee preuaile with God worthily, if we be grati-
 tious in their eyes who are onely vnder him, and being a
 meanes also not so much to aduance our selues as that
 the Church of God may finde fauour hereby. This was
 the end why the LORD brought *Mordecai* to the
 Court, and so did *Mordecai* very graciously answer
 this end.

Well thus wee haue heard of the place of his habita-
 tion. But may wee not know of what Country he was?
 Yea the holy Ghost tels vs he was a Jew by nation, a son
 of *Iacob*, and heire of the Couenant, who in the greatest
 Apostacie of his bretheren remained faithfull with
 his GOD, and therefore in that greatest misery findes
 fauour with men. Behold how the Lord is no respecter
 of persons, but in euery nation they that feare him shall
 be accepted of him, here's tribulation vpo the Jew in ge-
 neral, because they had forsake their god, & yet *Mordecai*
 the Jew is exempted, because he is faithfull with his God: AEs. 10. 35.

2 yea here's *Mordecai* of the house of *Saul* y rebellious and
 3 reprobate, and yet graciously deliuered from the com-
 4 mon corruption that so hee might bee gracious in
 the eyes of GOD. So iust is the Lord to recompence
 2 euery man according to his work, so little need hath hee
 of the sinnes of men to aduance his glory, so wise is hee
 to distinguish the cause from the person, so absolutely per-
 3 fect to do all thinges by him and for him-selfe.
Vse. Where we may learn as to be like vnto God in not
 respecting persons, where there is equallitie in the cause;
 4 so we must take heed that with the Anabaptist wee abuse
 not this liberty, as a cloake of disobedience against such
 5 persons as the Lord hath aduanced, neither lette vs robbe
 Gods free election with the Papist, as if because he is no re-
 6 specter of persons, therefore he chooseth men for their fore-
 7 seen righteousnesse, neither let vs preiudice the sincerity of
 8 our brethren, because they want the outward complement
 9 to their persons: but seeing the Lord regards not y outside,
 but indeed requireth the hart, & so principally accepts it,
 therefore let vs not content our selues with the out-side of
 the platter, but let vs labour to make al clean within: if we
 be aduanced let vs take heed of oppreßion, for God will
 iudge the greatest as wel as the least, if we be oppressed let
 vs not dispaire, for the cry of y fatherlesse is in the eares of
 the Lord, only let vs resigne vp our selues wholly into the
 hands of y gracious God who loued vs before wee were,
 for his own sake & not for ours, & so let our loue be pro-
 portiõable, not for our sakes, but for his glory, y being pur-
 ged daily of this drossy corruption we may be fitted to y
 glory immortal & vnspeakable, w shal inuest our persons
 according to that measure of grace which God hath filled
 them withal. *Mordecai* the Jew preserued in *Susis*, is a
 Jew of the Tribe of *Beniamin*, of the posteritie of *Saul*, re-
 serued among the Heathen, to praise the Lord, and deliuer
 his Church: Oh y liberty of the rich mercies of God, how
 faithfull is he in his promises, how mighty to the prefer-
 uation of his Church?

Obs. 38.
 The continu-
 ance of the
 Church and
 the condition.

Psal. 90.

Who would haue lookt for good of *Sauls* posteritie, y
 was

was forsaking of God, and had the Kingdome rent from him? Who would haue thought that there could haue bin a remnant in *Susis*, to call vpon the name of God, and to be zealous for his glory? Will God plāt a vine in *Canaan*, & remoue it into *Egipt*? shal it be remoued out of *Egipt* into the wildernes, & so into *Canaan* againe? shal it be remoued out of *Canaan* into *Babylon*, & from *Babylon* to *Susis*? shal his Church bee tossed and tumbled to all these places? shall all sortes of nations giue harbour thereto? shall the Turke harbour it? yea Antichrist himselfe shal not be able to roote it out: but euen there shalbe a Church, where saran hath his throne and the diuell his Synagogue: Christ shall raigne in the midst of his enemies.

Psal. 80

Reuel. 2.

1. Behold here the condition of the Church in this miserable world: It must be a Pilgrime vpon earth, scattered it shalbe ouer the face thereof that Gods power may be more magnified in the preservation thereof, and his worke the better accomplished both in, and by the same, while it being thus posted, and tossed to and fro, they rather looke and long for that Citty which is aboue; and by being thus changed, from vessell to vessell, it may both leaue sauour of it good behind, it to the conuersion and reuocation of others, & may haue it owne drosse also purged out thereby to be prepared to her eternall rest.

Reasons.

Obs. 39.
Condition of
the Church
it be scattered
vpon the
face of the
earth.

Use 1. By which we may learne to discern the true Church of God, not by her sitting as a Queene of the nations and flattering her selfe that she shall not be changed, but, by this we may discern the true Church of God, namely that as she must be tossed and scattered ouer the face of the earth, so she hath her loines girt vp & her feet ready shod thereto: not setting vp her rest because it is good to be here, but wayting the Lords leisure to call her forth where it please him. A notable warning to carnall Ghospellers that if they abuse the Ghospel it shalbe taken away from them, the Temple of the Lord will be no bond, to hold him among them: And withall a most excellent comfort to the Children of God: that *Susban* shall receiue them, when *Iudab* casts them out, and which may yet make

Elsay 47.

Ephes. 6.

2
Iere. 7.
Ezech. 10. 11.

3

4

for our greater comfort; this remouing of the Church, as it tends to the continuance thereof in this life, so it also fitteeth it to eternall rest in heauen. And therefore let vs not thinke it strange if we find not a biding Citty but are tossed vp and downe and scattered among the nations. It is the portion that our God hath allotted vs if we wil be true members of his Church, and it is good for vs thus to be changed, that we may feare and trust in God, who as by remouing our habitations he doth pluck vs out of those common desolations, which lie vpon places that despise his word: so in that he hath giuen vs the heathen for our inheritance and the vitermost bounds of the earth for our possession, hereby doth he also inuest vs with the possession of each Nation and the blessings thereof, which indeed properly do belong to vs: and all this that his Church may be continued on the face of the earth, yea may still preuaile and get ground in the world, till all her enemies be trod vnder her feet.

Mal. 55. 15

Obf. 40.

The faithfulness of God in that the Church of God shall abide for euer.

1 Esay 9.

Esay 65.

Rom. 11

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2

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Exod. 1.

4

Psal. 72.

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2 Cor. 10. 4

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And is it possible that this poore afflicted Church should still hold out being so scattered and weakened? Shall she continue for euer and shall no power preuaile against her? shal there yet be a remnant and a little seed; shal there be a trash, and a cluster that haeth a blessing in it: shall *Mordecai* and *Hester* both lewes remaine to reuiue the Church of God, when God had seemed vtterly to haue forsaken his people? yea surely the Lord is faithfull, and in iudgement remembreth mercy. The afflictions of the Church shal be a meanes to increase the same. Yea the enemies of the Church shal become seruants vnto it. Her weapons are mighty to cast downe the strongest hold: And her foundations are meanes to reuiue her againe. What should I say? Her outward abasing, increaseth inward glory: & her inward glory makes way to outward conquests. She must be purged of her drosse, that she may be cloathed with perfitt beauty: she must be blacke among men, that she may be faire in the eyes of her God, and so remaine more constant in his fauor and protection.

Use. Which being so. 1. as therefore the bandyings of the wicked are in vaine against Gods Church, So is our feare

1

fear as vaine that the Church may be destroyed. *And*
 therefore as the Church is continued, by being led aside
 into the wilderness: so let vs now liue by faith in the discern-
 ing of this Church. *Let vs* not forsake that fellowshippe, 2
 which God wil not forsake, but let vs cleaue to y^e Church 3
 that shall abide for euer: old things are passed away, and 4
 the shadowes are renewed, the vaile is pluckt off and the Hebr. 10.
 hand writing of ordinances put out. *Oh let vs* not end in
 the flesh that haue begonne in the spirit. *Let vs* hold the
 profession of our hope without wauering, and continue to 5
 the end, so is the crowne of righteousness laid vp for vs, 6
 which the righteous Iudge shall giue at that day.

And that we may be the rather certaine hereof, behold
 the Lord knoweth who are his, he calls them by their
 names, yea their names are registred & finally recorded in
 the word, that they may be the better perswaded that their
 names are written in heaven: so saith the spirit. *Whose* Obfer. 41.
name was Mordecai. See here the person whom God ap- Fit names to
 points for the deliueraunce of his Church; *Mordecai* is his be giuen to
 name & bitterness is his portion: he is the son of contrition, our children.
 y^e must be son of consolation. So do the children of God an-
 swere their names y^e which they are they also make profes-
 sion of. So doth God sanctifie his childre to y^e accomplish-
 met of his worke: So are they fitted to giue him al y^e glory. 1
Pse 1 Wherby we may learne *As* to giue fit names to our 2
 children, to shew our hope of them, or to put the in minde 3
 of their natural condition, or of the means of God towards
 them. So we are to acknowledge the loue of God vnto his 2
 children that takes perticular notice of them in giuing and
 changing their names, y^e they may be witnesses of his loue
 towards them; *Yea* herein also may we obserue a special art
 of Gods prouidence in recording the names and generati-
 ons of such champions of his: as haue stood out valiantly
 for the cause of his church; & being his instruments for the
 peace thereof: that so we may be the better conuinced
 in the truth of their stories: and so our historicall faith
 iustifying the truth of the word may make way for
 that iustifying faith in the Sonne of GOD, that so we

Sara, Sarah,
 Abram,
 Abraham,
 Iacob, Israel.

Ioh 3.

haue in him euertlasting life. To this end it followeth.

This Mordecai was the sonne of Iair the sonne of Shemei the sonne of Kish a man of Gemine. In which words the holy Ghost sets downe the pedegree of *Mordecai* by the lineall descent from his auncestors.

Obsc. 42.

Genealogies
how recorded
in the word

And yet very briefly too, omitting many generations as the manner of the spirit is, the recording of some being sufficient to avouch the truth of the story, and among the rest mentioning especially such who might more set forth the truth of Gods promises to the faithful, and thereby more settle faith for future occasions.

To this purpose is it that many others being omitted, there is speciall mention made here of the tribe of *Beniamin* and of some such in speciall which may seeme to come out of the house and family of *Saul*. That so we might know how that this *Mordecai* was of the house of *Saul* and therein behold the great mercy of God, who though he reiected *Saul*, and in a manner rooted out his posterity, yet he shewed great mercy vnto the posterity of *Jonathan* not onely in preserving the same in a lineall descent for the summe of five hundred yeares (if this *Mordecai* draw his petigree there, and surely it must be here or not from *Saul*) because his other children left no issue behind them, but in restoring also the same in some sort to the government which *Saul* and his posterity was utterly deprivied of. A notable demonstration of the mercies of God that indeed they are aboue all his workes, he retaineth not his wrath for euer because mercy pleaseth him he will not punish the the children for the fathers transgression, but the righteous seede shall live though the wicked stock be rooted vp, for shal not the Iudge of al the world do right? are not al foules his? hath not he a fatherly care ouer all? so that it is not he but their sins that make the difference of their conditions?

Obsc. 43.

Children shall
not be puni-
shed for the
fathers of-
fence.

2 Sam. v. 3.

Pse. 1. Surely if this lesson were througly learned, how would it humble the first borne, that they loose not their birth-right? how would it comfort the out-cast and despised that he may get the blessing? how is he taught hereby to repara

repaire his fathers house, euen by declaring wisely the sins
of his father : *how* may hee hope by this meanes to see
light in darkenesse, and to turne the curse into a gratiuous
blessing? *what* glory shall it be to him to borrow the *repaire*
of the breach and the restorer of the paths to dwell in. Such
was *Mordecai* of the family of wicked *Saul*; such was the
sonne of God, many of whose aunceltors in the flesh were
wicked persons. So will not God be tied to nature in the
bestowing of his blessings; and so wil God make nature
beholding to him in blessing beyond desert the fruit
thereof.

And surely where God bestowes blessings they come
not alone: behold the same God that prouides out of the
loynes of *Jonathan* those that shall build vp the old wast
places, he also continewes the line of *Jonathan* euen for the
space of siue hundred yeares and very likely in the poster-
ity of *Mordecai* hath not cut of the same; so requested *Jonathan*
that mercy might not be cut of from his house for e-
uer; so promised *Dauid*, and so the Lord makes it good; the
seed of the righteous shall be mighty vpon the earth and
the posterity of the Iust shall abide for euer, but for the
seede of the wicked it shall be cut of and their genera-
tions shal be destroyd from the face of the earth: *which* as it
stands with the righteousness of God that they which are
heyres of the couenant should also be partakers of the
blessing thereof: so it concernes his power to maintaine
the righteous seede, which the world especially labours to
roote out: y yea his mercy is exalted in giuing his children
herein a pledge of eternall happinesse, and his Church is by
this meanes continued, and aduanced on the earth.

Which as it containeth that Doctrin of diuels which
forbiddeth marriage to the best sort of men, as if it made
them bad and their posterity worse: so it also checketh the
infidelity of such who esteeme the plentiful issue as a crosse
vnto them if they be otherwise crossed and pinched in the
world. Neither can they also here be excused, who hauing
children do rather nourish corruption in them, that so they
may

1 Sam. 10. 15.

Obs. 44.
God continu-
eth and bles-
seth the poste-
rity of the
righteous.
Pal. 112.
Ps. 37. 26. 28
27.

1
2
3
4
1

2

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Math. 2.

may depriue them of the blessing of the couenant, then by holy education fit them thereto; *surely* the Lord that therefore made one though he had aboundaunce of spirit because he sought a Godly seede, will vndoubtedly destroy the seed, that the stranger hath sownne and the bastard slips shall not take roote.

Pro 2.

Obs. 45.

Posterity how
to be continu-
ed.

Pro 3. 15.

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Pla. 128.

Vers. 6.

Obser. 46.

They let Gods
Church to go
into captiuitie.

Epx. 10. 33.

Wouldst thou therefore know how thy posterity may abide for euermore. *First* then *grafi* thou in an holy stocke, and then drinke the waters of thine owne cistern, *offer* vp the first borne to God and prune thy oliue plants with holy discipline. Set not thy heart vpon them, neither dishonor the providence of thy God in a distrustful scraping for the; *employ* them in such callings as may humble the flesh, and season them with instruction to set them to grace, so shalt thou be a happy father of gracious children, and thou shalt not only to thy comfort see thy childrens children, but to thy greater comfort peace vpon Israel. Wel thus we haue heard of the habitation and country of *Mordecai*. Now lets a little further consider of his condition, it followeth.

Which had bene caried away from Ierusalem with the captiuitie that was caried away with Ieconiah King of Iudah, whome Nebuchadnezzar King of Babel had carried away.

In which word being referd as we haue proued before to the faith of *Mordecai* the spirit of God sets downe the estate and condition of *Mordecai* by a consequent, namely that he was borne in the land of his countries captiuitie. He was a captiue in a strange land, so were his fore-fathers in Egypt, and so are his posterity now slaues to all nations so are the children of God exercised with this affliction: *Ioseph* was sold for a bond-slaue & it is the lot of 5 poore Christians vnder the Turke and such enemies of the Gospel to be sold & led captiues into a strange land. And that not without the especiall providence of God, both to put his children in minde of their naturall condition that they are no better then the slaues of Satan, and also punish them iustly for their fornications with other nauons, by giuing them vp as a prey vnto them, and yet euen to their especiall good
and

and his great glory.

Who while they are in Babilon remember Sion, and thereby not onely apprehend the true cause of their affliction namely the contempt of Sion, and the comforts thereof, but remembring Sion they also reuiue such comforts as before they had stored vp, thereby to maintain in them the true life of grace: and so often remembering Sion, and meditating thereon as therby they witnesse their hartly longing after the same, so hereby they fit them-selues to the restoring of Ierusalem. To this end is it that while they are in captiuiy they hartly labour the conuersion of others, that so they may offer vp the riches of the gentiles vnto God and so the prouidence of God is magnified ouer them, not only in humbling the flesh in the land of their captiuiy their soule refuseth comfort, but further also in quickning the life of grace: their vowes are renewed, and heauen suffers violence, whereby prepayling with God, they do also preuaile with men, and so find such fauour in the sight of the heathen that once by them they are sent forth to Sion againe.

Vse. Thus captiuiy being a iudgment with may befall the Church of God, as this condemneth the vaine presumption of those that dreame of a locall perpetuity and visibillity of the Church of God: so it also chalendgeth their extreame folly that prepare the Church of God to so heauy a iudgement, either by bringing the Church in bondage at home, while they captiuate the liberty thereof to the lusts of men; or by impudent communicating the wickednesse abroad they do thereby choose the threshing floore, where the Church must be purged. Surely as God is righteous in his iudgements so is he mercifull, and therefore we shall beare the rod before we feele it, yea one correction of the almighty shal foretel another, that so we may see the plague and hide our selues, and happily auoyd the vengeance to come, who so is wise let him vnderstand these things and to whom the arme of the Lord hath revealed them.

Well the Church of GOD is in Captiuiy, and is it

not:

Psalm 137.

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Exod 54

Ezra 45.

Eche 45.

Obs. 47.

Church how

prepared to

Captiuiy.

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Iere. 39.

Iere. 51

2 Reg. 25

2 Chro. 36.

&c.

Obs. 48.

Gods Iudge-

ments are to

be recorded &

mediated.

Pla 16.

Ffal. 111

Ffal. 10. 4.

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Profits of

Gods iudge-

ments.

Esay 1.

9

Obs. 49.

God often

changeth and

confoundeth

the outward

prosperity and

visibilty of

his Church.

Pla 13. 2

not to some purpose that the holy Ghost makes such per-
ticular and often mention of it?

1 Yea surely. As the Lord is knowne by executing of
Iudgements, 2. So would he haue vs meditate and con-
template the same, that so we may be confirmed more and
more in knowledge. 3. And surely as they are some of
those workes of God which are worthier our considerati-
on. 4. So do they keepe vs from *security* in sinne and *pro-*
sumption of Gods mercies. They confound Atheists and
scorners of religion. They keepe vs in obedience and in-
crease our faith.

Vse 1. And therefore *seeing* the Lord doth daily bring
his iudgements to light, let them not passe aboue our
sight as if they concerned vs not. *Let* vs not esteeme them
as the ordinary effects of nature, and therefore haue no re-
ference at all to sinne. *Let* vs not suppress them in policy
or *deprave* them by malice. *Let* vs not in pride diminish
them, or in security forget them: But in the feare of God
take we speciall notice of them, as the admirable workes
of God, though nature be vsed in them: As seasonable
messengers of Gods will, and therefore to be hearkened
to; as liuely glasses to see our faces in, and therefore not
to forget our iniquities that are censured thereby: and
as profitable furnaces to purge out our dross, and take a-
way our sinne, and therefore we should the rather be a-
mended by them: *Surely* if they do not amend vs they
will be witnesses against vs and draughts of that cuppe of
wrath which the wicked shalbe drunken withall in hell.

But is the glory of the earth gone into captiuiy? is *Je-*
rusalem the city of the great God, and place of his delight
where he promised to dwell for euer, and so made fast
the barres of her gates, is she led captiue into a strange
land? Doth she dwell among the heathen? and there is none
to comfort her? are her aduersaries chiefe? & do her enemies
prosperity while she was faithful when God trod vpon the
neckes of her enemies and turned Kings in chaines and
Nobles in fetters of yron? Oh what a change is here of this
glorious

glorious Cittie? hath the Lord forgotten to be morneful?
 or can his will be resisted? Surely, as these outward
 things fall alike vnto all, and no man knoweth Gods loue
 or hatred by them; so the outward changes of earthlie
 things do iustifie the vnchangeablenesse and constancy of
 GOD. Not onely in that he deales indifferently to e-
 uery soule that sinneth, vnto the Iew first, and then to the
 Grecian, *but further also* by the changing of the outward
 state in this life, he make way for the accomplishment of
 his vnchangeable and eternall decree concerning the sal-
 uation of his Church, to which by these outward changes,
 she is graciously prepared.

Ecclesi. 9

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Rom. I.

4

Vse 1. Which as it makes the way to the accomplish-
 ment of his owne, so it iustifieth also the truth of his pro-
 mises, which being conditional in regard of temporall bles-
 sings, namely so long as they shalbe fit for vs, and wee
 can make right vse of them: when we faile in those con-
 ditions, these promises are yet so expired, that the right
 of them are remayning; we are onely so farre depriued of
 the effect, as that being humble therein and so renewed
 by repentance, wee not onely recouer our possession in
 these things, but are also further fitted to the enioying
 of the substance whereof these are but very shadowes.

And therefore as it stands with the constancy and co-
 uenant of God, that the Church may be thus obscured,
 and to the outward view extinguished, so doth it make al-
 so for the exceeding good of the Church of God and con-
 demnation of the world.

Obser. 50.

Changes of

the Church

tend to ex-

ceeding good

thereof.

Concerning the Church it tends to the good thereof
 many waies.

1. That it may discern it selfe to be the true Church of
 God, in that it liues and inwardly prospers, yea intierely
 preuailes, though the branches and leaues seeme dead and
 withred,

2 The Church hereby is exceedingly humbled in re-
 gard of the abuse of her former liberty, and so is fitted
 greuously to repentance.

3 She

3 She is also stripped of carnall confidence, by occasion whereof she fell to such abuse and so is prouoked to settle wholly on God.

1 Ioh. 2.

4 She hath now more comfortable experience of the power of God and Godlinesse, who as he now shewes himselfe more inwardly gracious, so doth he iustifie the soundnesse and integrity of his Church.

5 She hath now more leisure to gather inward strength as being happily eased of outward prosperity, a very maine let and weakning thereof.

Ioh. 7. 48.

1 Cor. 1. 23

Obser. 51.

The world
confounded
by the chan-
ges of the
Church,
Psal. 137.
Hest. 3

6 It hath by this meanes experience of her friends, and so is drawne thinner and nerre to God. And lastly she is by this meanes deliuered from greater desolations which in the Land of her prosperity might haue happened vnto her: as for the world it receiues his condemnation hereby many waies. 1. It is offended at this blackenesse of the Church and the crosse of Christ is a stumbling blocke thereto. 2. Affliction is hereby added to affliction, and now they cry *downe with it downe to the ground*, *Haman* is not content that the Church is in bondage, but he will lay a plot to roote it out quite. 3. Herevpon growes security and ripenes in sinne and so when the haruest is ripe the sickle shalbe put in. *Ioh. 1. 3. 13.* Thus doth God dispose of these great alterations of his Church. Thus make they for his glory the benefit of the Church of God and the confusion of the world.

Vses of the
afflictions of
the Church,
Iere. 7
Oste. 5
Amos 5.

And therefore seeing the Church of God may sometimes be thus base and contemptible in the eye of the world. 1. *Test* we not vpon such preiudges as are of the world. 2. *Neither* content we our selues with such whose glory shalbe our shame. 3. *But adorn* we the hidden man in the heart which shalbe glorious for euer. 4. *Reuerence* we the power of God who is able to ouerthrow the glory of the world. 5. *And feare* we his iustice if we be found in the like sins. 6. *But magnifie* we his prouidence, & is able thus to bring light out of his darkenes. 7. *and beleene* we constantly the perpetuity of the Church which is meruailously preserved

serued in her greatest decaies. Well thus we haue heard of the captiuitie of the Church. But who are they that beare the brunt of this heauy affliction?

Surely *Isconiah* the King his Princes and Nobles, the mightiest are most humbled & the rithest are most aimed at. So are great ones sure to drinke deepe of the generall scourge, when happily the poore of the land are ealed thereby: a matter most agreeable to the iustice of God. 1. Because great ones haue a conceipt, that they are out of gunshot, who dare touch them? who can pluck them downe? come famine and such like iudgements, they will haue a preuiledge, and therefore the Lord to confound their confidence he hath a rod of his indignation euen to breake the greatest in peeces.

Obf. 52.
Great ones
drinke deepe
of the cup of
vengeance.
Eccle. 9. 6
Iere. 39
Esay 23.

2 These greater persons are the ring-leaders in sinne, and therefore there is a time when they shalbe met withall.

3 They are the rod to scourge and afflict their people and therefore it is iust with God to heare the cry of the poore and to aueng them of their oppressors by giuing them ease when their oppressors shalbe recompenced.

Exod. 21
2 Theil. 1. 7

4 The pride and couetousnesse of the conqueror aymeth at the greatest, these shalbe sure to the spoile, howsoeuer others scape; a notable lesson both for great ones and inferiors.

1 As to humble the great ones in the sence of their greatness, because they cannot out-stand the wrath of God.

2 So to aduise them also to be carefull of their waies, not sparing great offences nor presuming of their owne greatness, lest the smart of their sinne light most heauily vpon themselves.

3 Secondly the subiect is here instructed as not to dreame of impunity seeing the greatest shall smart for it, and therefore to beare the yoake with patience, seeing there will be an end. 4. So to mourne when Princes do eate in the morning, and stretch themselves vpon Iuory beds, not regarding the afflictions of *Iosaph* because this is a certaine note of some iudgement ensuing,

Amos. 6. 5

5. And

5 And yet herein also to comfort themselues; that God will set a marke on those that mourne for the present euills; they shalbe deliuered from the common calamity.

But who is the rod that the Lord appoints to this great execution: the holy Ghost addeth,

Whom Nebuchadnezar King of Babel had caried away.

Obfer. 53.
God vseth
great and
mighty ene-
mies for the
chastizing of
his Church,
Esay 8.10.

Behold the rod with God vseth for the chastisement of his Children: euen a most proud, mighty and malicious enemy, whose eyes shall not spare them, nay who shall hope vitterly to roote them out. And yet the Lord most *righteous and mercifull* herein. 1. Abac. 12.

The righteousnes of the Lord appears in these circumstances.

Secl. 1.
This standeth
with his ius-
tice.
Ezech. 19.
1 Reg. 12.
Hest. 5.

1 Because it is in his choice to vse what rod he will and the rod he vseth is sanctified thereto. Esay 15.

2 The wicked teeth are an edged til they be on this worke, it is the office they desire, this count they their greatest of happinesse, all their honour is nothing, because *Mordecai* wil not bow vnto them, and therefore to choose they will haue a sling at *Mordecai*. 3. And is not the Lord righteous herein, so to giue them their desire that while they spurne at a stone it breakes them in peeces? Zach. 12.

Exo. 23
Ierc. 2.34

4 The Godlie themselues makes choice of this rod: they will *commit abomination* and al filthinesse with them, and *in their extremity they will seeke* for helpe of them. 5. And is not the Lord righteous to giue his children their desire herein, that being thoroughly secured hereby they might answer Gods desire in their vnfaigned repentance? 1. And doth not this magnifie exceedingly the *mercies* of God, *to provide* such a furnace as shall not dally with them but purge the thoroughly. 2. *That* so being chastized soundly in the world they may not be condemned in the life to come.

Secl. 2.
It stands also
with Gods
mercy.
1 Cor. 11.32

Vse 1. Surely as here we may behold the estate of the Church, that she must looke for great and sharpe afflictions. So we may also take notice of the power of sinne in arming our owne flesh thus cruelly against vs;

And

And seeing al curses frō Adam are turned into blessings by
 Chriſt, therefore lette vs learn to make our fleſh our friend, *Self. 3.*
 1. not by ſoothing in ſinne, nor pertaking there-with: but Fleſh how to
 by ſound reproofe and wiſe preſeruing our ſelues from be made our
 the contagion thereof: Labour wee to ſubdue the fierd.
 fleſh to God, and then it ſhall bee ſeruiceable vnto vs. 1
 And in all thinges labour wee to approue our ſelues vnto 2
 God; ſo ſhall he make our enemies at peace with vs. 3
 And ſeeing our greateſt enemies are they of our owne fleſh; 4
 reſt wee not in man, nor in the ſonnes of men, put wee no Verſe, 16. 17.
 confidence in a Councellor, no not in the wiſe that lies 4
 in our boſome; but count wee al as dung in regard of the Math, 10.
 peace of a good conſcience. ſo ſhal we hereby either make Mich, 7.
 our enemies our friends, or at leaſt we ſhal bridle & ſanc-
 tiſie to our good, their rage againſt vs.

Well thus wee ſee the Church of God is carried away
 captiue. But was this the firſt draught of this cup of af-
 fliction? Surely no: We ſhall find that this people of the Obſ. 54.
 Jewes, beſides many fore-running Iudgements of the ſa- God chaſti-
 mine, peſtilence, ciuill warres, forreigne inuaſions, and the like, ſerh his chil-
 had three great draughts before even of this cuppe of dren often
 captiuitie, and after this dranke the dregges of this cuppe. with the ſame
 The firſt draught did the Kingdome of Iſrael drinke: One 104.
 by Tiglath Pileſer the King of Aſſur, who carried away
 diuers of their Tribes into bondage, and the latter by 2. King. 15.
 Shalmaneſer King of Aſſur, who carried away the whole 19.
 reſidue of the ten Tribes into perpetuall captiuitie: the 2. King 17.
 other three draughts the Kingdome of Iudah dranke at 9. 10.
 in Manaſſeh his time, who was carried away captiue in-
 to Babilon, and vpon his time repentance reſtored againe. 2 Chro. 33.
 The ſecond draught was in the time of Iehoiakim King of 11.
 Iuda, who hauing rebelled againſt Nabuchad-nezzar king
 of Babel after that he had ſerued him three yeares; there-
 fore the King of Babel hauing firſt ſent his Captaines to
 ſpoyle and waſte the Country round about, to the very
 walles of the Citty, at length in the raigne of Iehoiachim
 the ſonne of Iehoiachim the former, begirts the Citty and

Wis. 14. 18.

1 Chro. 3. 16.
Ierem. 12. 14.

and strangely beseegeth it, The extremitie whereof, the King and his Princes beeing not willing to indure it, by the perswasion of the Prophet *Jeremy*, yeeld them-selues to the conquerors pleasure, and so for this time though they saued the Citty from desolation, yet both the spoile thereof was abundantly carryed away, and together with the King, his Princes, and Ministers of state, and meanes of defence, at least *seauenteene thousand* are at this time carryed into *Babylon*: and this is the captiuitie mentioned in this booke of *Hester*; the same which is here *Iechoniah* being no other then *Iehoiachim*, as appeareth by the euidence of the word, and circumstances of the history: It being no vn-usuall thing with the holy Ghost to call one person by diuers names.

2 Chro. 36.
Ierem. 39.
2 Reg. 15. 11.

After this captiuitie in the raigne of *Iehoiachim*, followed the last and most extreme draught of this cuppe, some *eleuen yeares* after, when *Zedekiah* raigned as Viceroy vnder *Nebuchad-nezzar*, who because he rebelled against his Lord: therefore came *Nabuchad-nezzar* the second time and beseeged the Citty, and the inhabitants standing vpon their defence, he after some two yeares siege took it, and not onely exposed it to the spoyle of his Army, but after defaced and consumed it by fire. The glorious Temple & stately Pallaces, the sumptuous building and proud walls, all were desolate, broken downe, and ruinated: And not onely so, but euen all the glory and multitude of the people were carryed at seuerall times into *Babylon*, saue only some poore that were left to Till the Land.

Esay. 17.
Obf. 55.
God chastiseth
his children in
measure and
by degrees.

Thus did this people drinke of this cuppe of captiuitie, and yet (as you haue heard) *in measure, in the branches therof*; not all at once, least they should be drunke thereby, and so returning to their vomit, make no right vse thereof but by degrees, now a little, then somewhat more, the rod being a teacher, euen while it lay vpon them, and therein teaching vs the singular wisdom and mercy of our God in the chastising of his children: he comes not vpon them

sodainly

sodainly, neither *sweepes* he them away *at once*: but as he giues them *warning* of the rod, that so they may be prepared for it, so he *orders his iudgements* that they may best preuaile. And therefore first he shootes forth his more gentle and scattering arrowes of the *famine* and *pestilence*: which though they hit some, yet they flye ouer the heades of many, that by these, being warned they might be brought to repentance, when these milder corrections will not serue, then hee smites them yet *seauen times more*: here come in *ciuill dissensions* and *forreyne Inuasions*, to humble & abait the pride of the great ones; and if as yet they will not returne vnto him, then behold *hee will smite them seauen times more*: The cuppe of *Capitiuie* shall be ministred vnto them: yet shall they drinke thereof at times, in measure and by degrees: So doth the Lord in iustice remember mercy, so doth hee measure out his Iudgements, both that wee may beare them, and that by them we might be brought to repentance: As for the wicked, the Lord deales not so with them. *Affliction shall not rise the second time*, with one stroke will he make an end of them: *roote and branches, head and taile*, will he cut off at one blow.

Leuit. 1

Amos.

1 Nehemia,

Genes, 19.

Vse. Which providence of God is manifested most infalibly in the course of his chasticements vpon his Church, as it namely confoundeth the insolency of the wicked, who thinke to make an end, when God doth begin; so it is also a gracious checke to the preiudice and impatience of Gods children, who notwithstanding this apparant difference that God makes between them and the wicked in the seuerall chasticements, which he laies vpon them: for many times in y^e folly doe they both censure God as their *enemie*, and them-selues to be dealt withall not as friends but enemies.

1

2

Iob.
Lament. 2.

And seeing affliction giueth vnderstanding, and the Lord especially aimeth hereat in this ordering of his chasticements; Therefore lette the man of God feare the rodde, and who hath appointed it. Lette vs take no-

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4
Amos. 2. 13.

Jerem 13.
Amos. 3.

Verse, 7.

tice hereby that God appointeth them, in that they are so wisely and mercifully ordered: and so let vs patiently vndergoe this burthen and be comforted therein, that wee are vnder the hands of a father who knoweth whereof we are made, and therefore will lay no more vpon vs then we shall be able to indure: *And seeing* the Lord hereby intends our repentance, that if we will ease him of our finnes, he will ease vs of his rods: Let vs here wisely take notice of the cause of the continuance of his iudgements, namely impenitencie and increase of sinne. *And lette* this be our marke., to *looke for seauen times more* if we do yet multiplie our finnes against the Lord of glory. And therefore let vs meet the Lord by repentance that he may stay the hand of his iustice *Let al* States be humbled, because *ſ* Lyon hath roared. And seeing the hand of the Lord is stretched out stil let vs not liue by examples, & build our happines vpon *ſ* broken reeds of *Egipt*: *Let vs* not run to *Assur*. & trust in vain helps: but *let vs* turn to *ſ* Lord, for he hath wounded and he wil heale vs, he wil render vs the losse that the pestilence and inundations, the intollerable frosts, and fearefull earth-quakes (our cruell oppressors at home, and treacherous friendes abroad) haue made: he wil yet dwell among vs for his name sake, and restore beauty for ashes, yea we shall for euer liue in his sight. Thus haue we now the condition of *Mordecai*, he is in the state of bondage and slavery to *ſ* wicked: How doth he now behaue him-selfe in this condition? Doth he yeeld to necessitie, and imbrace the present world? Doth he renounce his God and the care of his country, to eat of such things as please the wicked? No you haue heard before that he liued vnbukeably: but what instance haue we to giue euidence thereof: *It followeth therefore.*

He nonrished Hadassah that is Hester, his uncles daughter: What reason had he to moue him thereto? Here is, first the bond of nature: She was his uncles daughter. Secondly, Here is the bond of necessitie, for she had neither father nor mother. Thirdly, here's a priuledge of nature. And the Maide

Maid was faire and beautifull to looke on, the rather to allure and perswade him thereto. Fourthly, here is the bond of conscience, likely it is she was committed vnto him after her fathers and mothers decease, and therefore it is said.

And after the death of her father and mother, Mordecai tooke her for his owne daughter.

First he not only tooke vpon him her education and maintenance, but adopted her also as his owne daughter, and so to conferre vpon her the priuiledges of a Child.

VVherein first we may behold the great mercie of God vnto his children, that in their greatest afflictions, they shall be prouided for: *Mordecai* shall be able to nourish *Hester*, and *Hester* shall haue her Vncle *Mordecai* not only to preferue her from the extremitie of misery (which Orphanes are subiect to) but to traine vp this tender *Maiden* in the feare of God; and to defend her chastitie fro the rage of lust.

Two notable priuiledges of Gods children vnder the crosse, that either they shall be able to succor others, or they shall find reliefe with the safety of their credit, and peace of conscience.

And surely that Gods children in their troubles, as they *Obser. 56.* are able, so they should comfort others; this serues Gods children are to comfort to the magnifying of GODS power, and faithfulness towards them; and also to the great tryall of their & relieue each other in their most holy faith. troubles.

The power of God is seene herein, that the wicked are bridled, who (out of question) would not haue the righteous liue by them, vnlesse they will hang vpon them, if they might haue their wills, they would keepe them bare ynough from doing good to others; and so the children of God are planted in the midst of their enemies, and herein also doth appeare the great faithfulness of our god, who inables his children to send where they should borrow, and by this to be assured of a good successe in all occasions

casions, seeing in *y* land of their captiuitie they can minister
 to others: and is not our faith very graciously tried herein,
 when hauing our liues continually in our hands, and there-
 fore no certainty of what we haue; yet depending on Gods
 prouidence, we do comfort others, that had more need of
 comfort and remedy our selues. Would not some carnall
 wise virgins haue here replied; *wee* haue little ynough
 for our selues, we cannot spare it least wee want in the
 time of need; *we* must keepe somewhat to appease our task-
 maisters, *somewhat* to buy our liberty, *we* shall be thought
 to be rich if we be harbourers of others, and so shall bee
 markes to the mallice of the spoylers: *we* shal hereby dis-
 couer our selues to be patrones of such out-casts, as being
 entued where they deserue to be pittied, may breed no
 good blood for our quiet setling: Thus would blind rea-
 son haue schooled a carnal man, but the man of God hath
 another rule, hee sees his life is in his hands, and therefore
 he will do good while hee may, he knowes now there is
 more need and therefore he wil cast his bread vpon *y* wa-
 ters: and where shal he haue such comfor & portion in wel-
 doing, as in relecueng the household of faith, he sees his
 brethren like to go to the wal, and therefore hee wil rescue
 him though it cost him the setting on; *he knowes y* to feare
 well doing in regard of the wicked, is to giue strength to
 the wicked, and so deprivue himselfe of the oportunity of
 doing good. *He beleeuēs y* God wil then come to deliuer
 when he casteeth vp a *Moses* to take the cause in his hands;
he sees it will daunt the enemy when Gods children make
 much one of another and hold together; and therefore hee
 becomes a meanes to strengthen the weakest and vnite
 them in families, and so bind them in holy leagues and as-
 sentations together; *he feares* no euill tidings, no not the
 spoile of his estate, because his heart is stablised and be-
 leeuēs in God, and hee distributes thereof to the poore,
wherby he wins the hearts of the enemy, yea hee will not
 feare vntil he see his desire vpon his enemies. And why?
 the Lord is his shepheard, and he liues by faith in the son
 of

Moyes.
 1 Exod.

Psal. 112.

of God, and though he passe through fire and water, yet the Lord shall bring him into a wealthier place. This is ymerciful man that sowes in teares: the Lord wil recompence him abundantly; he shal reap in ioy: so was *Mordecai*, and so hee did finde. 1. *Vse.* A notable president of true bounty, and therein also a liuely marke of the true child of God. And therefore lette not inabilitie hinder vs from comforting others, least the widdowes mite be a witnesse against vs: Let not pollicie discourage vs from releueing the Saints of God, least while we please men wee make God our enemy: Lette vs not feare want when God is the borrower; let vs not doubt of requital; where his children are engaged: let vs not be newters in such cases, where not to be with, is against God; but let vs maintaine Gods side that he may maintaine vs. *Obediah* wil nourish the Prophets of God, though *Iezabel* intend the contrary, and *Jonathan* will succor *Dauid*, though his father seeke his life: and did they want their reward? *Mordecai* nourisheth *Hester*, who happily for her sake beeing beutyful might haue indangered his estate. Oh let vs not consult with flesh where God comaneth! But how I pray you is *Hester* nourished? What doth she pay for hir outward maintenance? Is her consciēce set to sale for y belly? Is her beauty made the broker to maintaine this miserable life? Doth she offer the sin of her soule, for the fruit of her body? Surely no; ypo these tearmes she might haue found fauour in the eyes of a *Persian*, & such mercies of the wicked had bin extreme cruelties. Behold here then the true bounty of Gods children; their table is no snare, their riches are no bait to corrupt y souls of men: they intend not to make *Dauid* their slaue, by their kind entertainment, they giue him not *Michel* to bereaue him of his life: They blind not the eyes of the wise by their bosome liberality, nor hunt after the pretious life of men, with their sacrifices, and peace offerings; they kill not when they lisse; but giue that it may bee giuen: their principall marke is to winne the soule; so did our Saviour turne water into

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Vers. 12. 10.

Vers. 13.

Pla. 69. 21

Obf. 57.

The bounty

of Gods chil-

dren is no

Snare, but ef.

pecially laud-

bours the

good of the

soule.

Deut. 16. and

Vers. 7.

Ioh. 2. 2

wine, that nature might bee turned to grace : so did he giue a great draught of fish to make fishers of men. So doth GOD bestow these outward blessings, that beleueing in him, we may see greater things the these.

And so are his children like their heauenly Father, so they do find their bread after many daies againe, when it is thus distribut. in conscience and wisdom.

Vse 1. A notable rule for true liberality : that the streame thereof turne good to the soule. Not that we should be exempted hereby from doing good to the wicked, vpon pretence to harden them in their sinne. Neither that we should content our selues with that liuelesse bounty of many who will seeme to comfort the soule with a little lip-labour (*God helpe &c.*) neither yet to neglect our ordinary callings in an honest care of this life, as if all were lost labour which is not immediately imploied vpon the soule : But so to supply the bodie as that it may serue the soule : So to seeke the Kingdome of Heauen, as not to neglect the care of our families : So to shew our true loue to the soule by releueing the body for it sake : And so to humble the sinne as that we haue compassion in the person : Making difference therein where wee see likely-hood of most inward good : And shortning our bounty where it may be an occasion to the flesh. Thus he that scattereth shall haue plenty. So did *Mordecai* distribute, and so the Lord gaue a blessing.

And was it not a wonderfull blessing of GOD, that a beautifull Maiden, left fatherlesse and motherlesse, should meete with such a gardian : who did not see her beauty to sale, and her conscience on the racke ? how many distressed soules are there, that in the land of their captiuitie, thinke it an high blessing if the ship-rack of their conscience may procure their quiet and the prostituting of their beauty may winne them fauour.

Behold here then an excellent priuiledge of Gods children in their extremities, that they shall finde releife with

Ob. 38.
God provides
for his chil-
dren in trou-
ble with the
safely of a
good con-
science.

with the safety of a good conscience : not one haire of their head, much lesse the peace of the minde shall miscary : thereby : and why ? *are they* not the beloued of God and in their chastizements most beloued ? and how shall this loue appeare if they bee not kept fit for it ? *hath* not God promised that all shall turne to their good , and shall then their afflictions be meanes of their chiefest hurt ? *Hane* not the Saints of God come out puter from this furnace ? *can* *she* outward reliefe be a blessing without the feast of a good conscience ? *may* *doth* not the inward peace giue true contentment in affliction ; and so keeps vs from reaching out our hand to wickednesse , for the easing of our burthen ? Would the Godly desire to liue in affliction : were it not that they might increase in grace , and be more fitted to Heauen ? and will not the Lord fulfill the chiefe desires of them that feare him ?

Are we not by these troubles summoned to our end and shall we now remoue the care of that which may make vs giue vp our account with ioy ?

And what I pray you is it that holdes vp in troubles ? doth man liue by bread onely ? surely no , it is the spirit of a man that beareth his infirmity , but a wounded spirit who can endure ?

Vse A notable condition of the height of worldly wisdom , whose maine plea is this , that *they must liue* , and therefore when troubles comes , which summons them to die , yet they must do as the world doth , that is , that they may liue longer in misery , they will (what lies in them) renounce the meanes of liuing for euer in true happinesse : *As if* there were a necessity laid vpon them to make ship-wrack of a good conscience , that they may escape death when there is no other likeli-hood but death knockes now at their dores : *Or if* there were hope of longer life , yet the keeping of a sound heart would not be life to the bones , and so enable them the better to beare their infirmity : *Where* is those mens faith that pleade onely with *Esau* for the portadage that they may not die for

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If they be not here : y drawn nearer to God & made more conformable to him.

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4 for hunger, and know not that God can giue them the
 5 blessing whereby they may haue wisdom and riches.
 6 *What* madnesse is there to runne deeper on the score
 7 when we are called to paiment? *What folly* to distrust God
 then when we are most cast vpon him? *What wisdom* to
 forsake God, when the world forsakes vs, what hope of
 comfort in the world when we make it thus our enemy?

Vse Well, who so is wise let him vnderstand these
 1 things, and to whom the arme of the Lord hath revealed
 2 them: *Let him learne* to liue by faith, that so sinne do
 3 not deceiue him. *Let him* wisely consider the inualluable
 price of his soule, and then bethinke that he sell it not for
 4 that which could not buy it: *Let him* know he shall least
 enioy that which he buies at so deare a rate: and for the af-
 5 ter receiuing (I tremble to speake of it) *Let him* remember
 he hath a wise prouider, who as he needs not his sinne to
 accomplish his prouidence so he preserues from sinne
 that we may be happily contained therein.

And let him in patience possesse his soule, looking with
Moses to the recompence of the reward; that so he
 may auoide the pleasures of sinne, and runne with ioye
 the race that is set before him: Thus was *Hester* prefer-
 ued by the tuition of *Mordecai*. Thus found *Daniel* fauor
 in the eyes of the *Eunuch*, and so was kept vndefiled from
 the idolatrous meates.

Obfer. 59.
 Of the change
 of names, and
 whether it be
 lawfull now
 for Christians
 to change
 their names.
Genes. 41.
Ioseph, *Abra-*
ham, *Sarah*,
Jacob, *Israel*.
G. 32. *Daniel*
 & *Socif*.
 2 *Reg.* 23. et
 24. *Ioachim*
 et *Zedekey*.

But let vs proceed a little further, and consider who it
 is that is nourished by *Mordecai*, who it is that is brought
 to so low an estate. It was *Hadaßah*, that is *Hester*, euen she
 that is after aduanced to the highest estate on earth.

Concerning this variety of names imposed on one per-
 son, whether it were by *Mordecai* her Tutor as taking her
 to be his child, or by the *King* at her marriage, to giue
 her the more honour: For the thing it selfe, there is no
 controuersie, but that the custome of changing names,
 hath bene ancient, and laudable. And the reasons of
 these changes, might be these.

1 Either some increase of blessings, a speciall fauour
 which

which hath beene signified by such changes, and this might be the reason why the Lord changed names.

2 Or some change of the outward condition, which was the reason why the conquered had their names changed. 3. Or to shew the power of the conquerors over them; so seruants when they were made free, had also their names changed.

4 Or lastly some change of the inward condition, and so the names of Christians were changed at their baptisme, or at their conuersion by our Sauour Christ &c.

Use 1 Which howsoeuer it hath beene the practize of former times, and that vsed not onely by the heathen, but by God himselfe, yet as many such customes were particular to their time. 2. So I take it, this custome is now so farre antiquated, as the speciall cause thereof (namely the changing of names at Baptisme) is now ceased. 3. If among vs any such occasion fall out, where Iewes and Turkes, &c. are to be conuerted, I see not but this liberty remains still. 4. As for vs who haue such names imposed on vs euen at our entrance in the world and Church, which should be badges of our profession, and prouoke vs to constancy therein: I see not why these in any sort should be changed, vnlesse we thinke it lawfull to change our profession with them.

And is it then *Hester* the *Queene*; that is *Hester* the fatherlesse? Is she a miserable captiue that was after a royall Empresse? must she be nourished by *Mordecai*, who after giues lawes to a mighty Kingdome? so was *Moses*, *Ioseph* and the like: This is the Lords doing and it is admirable in our eyes.

Obf. 60.

Those which are raised vp to greatest dignities are usually in most desperate and low estate.

1 This doth he in power worke, without and contrary to meanes to confound the pride of nature. 2. This doth he in wisdom, that wee may ascribe promotion to him. 3. Nay this he doth in loue, that we may giue him the glory, in being truly humbled with so great aduancement.

Use 1 Learne we here as not to presume of meanes. 2. So not to distrust the want of them. As to be comforted in our lowest

- 1 lowest estate, seeing it may be bettered; *so* to prepare for
 2 found humiliation before we be truly exalted. So was
Hester before she was exalted.

But what reason hath *Mordecai* to take this care of
Hester? First it is said shee was *His vnckles daughter*.

The band of affinitie moued him to this duty,
 shee was his cousin Germaine, and therefore hee tooke
 charge of her.

- 1 A very good bond to inforce this duty, *not only* imposed
 Obf. 61. by God in this case vpon the like occasions of widdow-
 Kinred to bee hood, &c. But very agreeable to the law of nature, both
 relieved. being of our blood in a more particular manner, so that in
 relieuing of them we keepe the true order of nature; and

- 2 so performe therein honour to God and our selues, as
 1 Rom. herein approving our selues to haue *naturall affection*; the
 2 Tim. 3. want whereof is a maine challenge of impiety.

- 1 *Vse*. This condemneth those monsters in nature y^e seed
 1 on their owne flesh, deuouring their kindred, or leauing
 them to the spoile: aboue all others affecting them least, and
 most vnaturally preferring strangers before them.

- 2 As also they are here reprov'd that preferre the naturall
 affinitie before the spirituall: And reiect the care of
 GODS Church vpon pretence of prouiding for their
 families.

- 3 And lastly hereby wee may learne so to subdue nature,
 that we giue it also her right; *not* stripping our posterity of
 their lawfull inheritance, vpon pretence of preferring the
 spirituall affinitie, least we burthen the Church and wrong
 our posterity: but wisely deuiding vnto each his right:
 our children their patrimony, and the Church her compe-
 tencie; in equallitie of inward gifts, giuing nature her pri-
 uiledge, and God the glory in preferring greatest blef-
 sings.

But had *Hester* this need of reliefe from her Kinsman?

Yea surely *it followeth*.

For she had neither father nor mother.

A stranger shee was, and therefore to be relieu'd by
 Kinswoman.

kins-oman she was, and therefore nature requires it but she was an *Orphane*, and therefore there was a necessitie in it.

And surely such is the condition of the children of God, they are left fatherlesse and motherlesse: euen to the wide world. *And thus* not without the speciall prouidence of God, who both may thus leaue them as it seemeth good to him; *And doth* this also for their exceeding good, that *forgetting* their Fathers house and the proppes of flesh they may more intirely depend vpon him, and haue better experience of his immediate prouidence.

Vse 1 And therefore: *let it* not be strange vnto vs, if God shall thus deale: neither *let vs* desire this day of affliction: some are sick of their parents, and in the end they are sick for them. *Let vs* make sure of God our father who now will take vs vp: *and* make much of our spirituall Fathers, who in Gods steed are set ouer vs: *Pray* we for the Magistrate who will be alwaies a father vnto vs, *and loue* we the Saints that they may be our Father: so shall we neuer want a Father, while God hath a Church and Kingdome, and he shall aduance vs his children to that glorious inheritance.

But doth not God, make his seruant gracious in the eye of *Mordecai*, the better to moue him to the performance of this duety? Yea surely besides the inward beauty of her minde, where-with she was furnished to approue her to *Mordecai*: Behold the Lord adorne her with outward grace, and beauty, that so she might be fitter for that honor which after was cast vpon her: so it followeth.

And the maide was faire and beautifull to look on, That is, together with her beautie, she was comely and well-fauoured; two notable outward graces of a yong Virgin: In regard whereof, as she had more need of a gardian; *Because* of natures aptnes to sinne vpon such a preiudice; *And the forceable battery* that would be layd to her from without: so it pleaseth GOD to prouide for her accordingly.

Obs. 62.

Gods children lett Orphanes in the world,

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Psal. 27

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Obs. 63.

The great natures gites, nee the greater biddes.

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Vse 1

Vse. 1. Which as it condemneth the practise of parents that visually giue most liberty where natures gifts are more eminent, and put forth their beautifull children to the preferment of the world, as if their outward feature would be their preueledge and provider, keeping their more humble children (as we say) at home vnder gouernment; *so* it is a notable lesson to all natures children that haue outward endowments aboue the other, that in this respect they most feare them-selues, and they rather carie a seuerer hand ouer them-selues for these priueledges; as knowing that such gifts not kept vnder, are but fuell to sinne; yea patterns thereof, and yet by restrayning of them they may be sanctified vnto vs.

Obs. 46. And surely, if it may please the Lord to sanctifie them vnto vs: may they not be furtherances for the bettering of our estate in the world; *yea surely*, as God giues them not in vaine, but to bee vsed in the world, so by this meanes they shall preuaile as both rightly vsed of vs and so worthily respected of GOD him-selue: who both craueth his gifts with conuenient honour in this life, and makes the least of their steppes to aduance vs to eternall happiness.

And therefore as this doth not warrant that whorish sophisticating of natures gifts by adulterous arts vpon pretence to set out nature in her glory, and to procure her aduancement: *so* it condemnes on the contrary, that obiect of defacing natures endowments, as if they were not Gods blessings but rather enemies to Godlinesse: *And so* out of these contraries we may learne a ciuell course, so to esteeme of these gifts as they further sanctification; and so to vse them as may stand therewith, *Namely* in a holy feare of them to be *humbled* in them, and the rather in regard of them both to stand in awe of God, *as also* to a voyde such occasions as may make them weapons vnto sinne, maintayning them daily by the word; and the examples of the most sober; and *wisely* considering the changeablenesse of them make we them seruants to inward graces and let their speciall

Sell. 1.
How to vse
natures gifts
aright.

ciall grace and luster be from thence so shall they serue vs to preuaile with God, and preuailing with God we shall also preuaile with Men, *well now* we see the reason why *Mordecai* takes vpon him the tuition of his kinswoman: and that we may obserue in him a care and conscience more then ordinary, behold he not onely receaues her into his familie, and so deliuers her from misery, but adopts her also as his child: both to giue her more security & also thereby to fit her to further aduancement, as being now the reputed daughter of him, who was admitted one of the family of this great *Mordecai* and that to a place of no meane trust, euen to be keeper of the pallace. An office the liker to be of more *trust*, by how much these *Persian Princes* kept great estate, and were more iealous of their persons: and thereby also not vnlikely to be more commodious in regard of the stricktneesse of accessse into the palace. Behold here a further act of the prouidence of God. Miserable *Hester* hath now a house to put her head in, and the fatherlesse hath a father provided for her by the Lord, *for so it followeth*, *And after the death of her father and mother Mordecai tooke her for his owne daughter.*

Obs. 65.

See here the lawfulnessse of this liberty of adoption. *Mordecai* adopted *Hester* to be his daughter, so doth *Pharaohs* daughter *Moses* to be her sonne: so doth God in Christ Iesus adopt vs to be his sonnes: *A case* wherein the mercy and goodnesse of God is most comfortably manifested not onely that the adopter here by is supplied with the benefit of children, which are the blessing of God, and strength of age in whom he may receaue his life, and continue his posterity, but hereby also the want and misery of orphans is gratioously relieued, and that blessing of God is in part performed to a land that there shall be no begger in Israel, *And* doth not the Lord in this liberty prouoke vs to mercy? doth he not gratioously make triall of our bowels of compassion? by leauing vs to this liberty though hee command it not?

It is lawfull to adopt.
Gal. 4.

Adoption not commanded but a thing left to our liberty.

Doth

Self. 2.

Who to be adopted.

Those especially which being furnished with grace want meanes to imploy the same.

Self. 3.

Obiection.
God will provide for us.

doth he not secure vs hereby of doing good seasonably and conscionably? *are not* vaine controuersies preuented about dead mens goods? are not foolish hopes hereby wisely cut of? and each man sent to depend on Gods prouidence and worke out his liuing? surely though this may iustifie the lawfulnessse of this liberty, yet because we may abuse the same to the maintenance of the flesh, therefore are we to set bounds vnto this liberty, both in regard of the *persons* that wee are to adopt, as also concerning the *end* of our adoption.

Concerning the *persons* we are to adopt, as here we may safely perferre, our *kindred* before a stranger: so I take it we must haue herein a principal respect vnto the *spiritual* affinity if so be our kinne shall not be in apparant necessity: nay if the house-hold of faith be in like extremity, we are rather to make our choyce there, then any where else: because we haue more and better bands to tie vs here: *And* we may with one comparison looke for better successe of our liberty; *And* which is especially to be heeded of vs, because we haue the example of our gracious God for our warrant therein; who as he onely adopts those that were eternally beloued in his sonne, so especially when it is in our choice, we ought to make choise of such for our children by adoption; who haue best euidence to be the sonnes of God.

Vse. 1. Which as it condemneth the practise of those that ty them-selues in their choyce simply to their kindred, without respect of inward finnes: whereas they might haue better choice in the Church; both for inward and outward gifts; *so I take it* here by they do much crosse the prouidence of God, which intending by this liberty the choyce of the most worthy, is hereby resisted, when the choyce is thus tied to the kindred.

If it shall bee objected that G O D will provide for his, their gifts wil aduance them, and therefore I ought rather to provide for such as by reason of there impotency of gifts are like other-wise to sticke by it: *indeed* as the impotencies of nature are to bee supplied, so

so her best gifts also as hath beene taught,) had need of a bridle of Tuition to reſtraine their priueledge, and ſo fit them to grace, but yet warily to be preſerued to the benefit of adoption, becauſe, as hereby their corruption is likely to be maintained, ſo without this benefit of adoption, ſuch as haue beſt gifts of nature, are moſt likely to ſhift in the world.

But for the gifts of grace, it is not ſo with them: they are hated of the world, and ſo make their owners hatefull: where then ſhall this be remedied? doſt thou ſay God will prouide for his, and therefore ile paſſe them by? I tell thee, God hath bountifully prouided for his: he hath giuen them his ſonne and ſo all is theirs, they haue a right in all, thou haſt no uſe but for their ſakes; thou art Gods ſteward for their good. Their is plenty in *Egipt* to releue the Church. And how ſhalt thou then better make thee friends of thy vnrighteous Mammon, then willingly to admit thoſe into the poſſeſſion thereof: who as they are expoſed to want to trie thy wiſdome herein, whether thou wilt ſanctifie thy eſtate or no; and take true comfort in thy riches: ſo leſt the gathering of theſe things, might hinder them in better: therefore the Lord hath a time to put them into poſſeſſion without their labour whither thou wilt or no: though thou ſhouldeſt heape vp ſiluer as the duſt, and prepare rayment as the clay, thou maiſt prepare it, but the iuſt ſhal put it on and the innocent ſhall diuide the ſiluer.

And were it not better for thee when it is in thy choice, to make ſure thy habitation by this life, and ſo lay vp a good foundation againſt the day of Chriſt, receiuing God into thy family, in the adoption of his children: then by ſhutting out the Lord, thereby to ſhut thy ſelfe out alſo, not onely from the earth, but from heauen to: and yet al thy policy ſhalbe mightily confounded: *Joſeph*s bretheren ſhall bow vnto him: and the righteous ſhalbe thy haire, whether thou wilt or no?

Uſe 2 And ſurely this doth no leſſe condemne the
I vanity

1 Cor. 3. 22

Luk. 16

Iob. 26

16.

17.

vanity of those, that neglecting religion and onely seeking a name on earth, do therefore make choice of such in this kind, as are of the name: reiecting also nature, & common humanity: Little do these men consider that it is the *memoriall of the iust* onely, that shall endure for euer, as for the wicked, their name shall rot; and though they build them houses, and call them after their names, though they adopt such children, as may continue the name; yet looke we to the third generation if the place remaine in the name, nay consider we wisely, if the place it selfe can be found?

3. As for those who adopt strangers, and do also change their names, moued thereby neither by the bond of *religion*, no not so much as *nature*, but rather by the *abuse* of *nature* and fellowship in euill: Though such things should not be named among Christians, yet it is no meruaile, if like will loue their like, and society in euill will haue a cloake for the maintenance thereof

Sett. 4.
Ends of adoption.

Thus farre of the persons whom we must adopt.

Now for the ends we must propose herein; proposing principally the glory of GOD, the furtherance of religion and releeuing of the truely afflicted; we may here also in a second place respect present comfort herein and future propagation of posterity, being wisely purged of security and vaine-glorie.

Well thus we haue *Hester* now the adopted daughter of *Mordecai*, and so by Gods good prouidence this Orphan is well provided for.

And hath not the Lord much better provided for vs; whom he hath in Christ Iesus adopted to be his children, and so to be heires with him of eternall glory? Oh that we would therefore walke worthy of so high a calling; that we would behaue our selues as sonnes of so gracious a Father: Surely *Hester* in all her glory is not like the meanest of the sonnes of God: and the least in the Kingdome of heauen is greater then *Salomon* in all his Maiesty.

Well

Well, let this be our comfort, that though it be not our *Self*. 5.
 lot to meete with a *Mordecai* to be adopted to an earthly *State of adop-*
 Kingdome, yet we haue such an enheritance, which all the *tion in Christ*
 world cannot depriue vs of. And let vs make triall of our *how discer-*
 adoption by our *strange cries* vnto our Father. Let this *ned.*
 straight appeare by *iustifying his cause*. Let his cause be
 maintained by *increasing his kingdome*, and his kingdome
 being come, *Let vs lift up our heads* that his will may be
 done in earth as it is in heauen; that God may bee all
 in all.

And surely though it be a curse vnto the wicked to
 be left as Orphanes, yet it is but a temperall iudgement, *Orphanes are*
 and so may befall (and hath) the Godly, and therefore *to be prouided*
 though the wicked being Orphanes shall seeke their *for and how.*
 bread and desolate places, yet GOD is the helper of *Psal. 109*
 the Fatherlesse, yea he is a Father vnto them. And there-
 fore as he hath giuen expresse commandement that they
 should not be hurt, lest the like iudgement befall the
 oppressors, so hath the Lord also precisely inioiend that
 releefe and succour and that not onely vncertainely as
 strangers by startes, and at their selemne festiuities, when
 by reason of the aboundance, it is not so thanks worthy;
 but as those within their gates and of their household
 that are to haue a free and settled maintenance; as ha-
 uing a continuall set prouision allotted thereto: *Ob*
 what a sanctifying is this of our prosperitie! *What* a
 comfort in our troubles? *What* a sacrifice to God? what
 a sweet fauour to man? *What* peace doth it breed at therof,
 home? *What* true honor abroad.

Vse 1. Well, *Let this* be a glorious crowne to those
 Citties and persons who haue set harbours for Orphanes
 and strangers: *And let* it be the glorie of true religi-
 on that it hath taught such places and persons Chri-
 stian duetie: *Let* the *Ostrich* be ashamed that leaues
 her egges in the sand, and *let* vnnaturallnesse be confoun-
 ded that forsaketh her owne: *Crueltie* bee con-
 demned that makes the fatherlesse: *and let* oppression
 I 2

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2
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4
Obfer. 66.

Orphanes are
to be prouided
for and how.
Psal. 109

Deu. 10, 18
Psal. 9, 19
Psal. 68, 5.
Exod. 22, 21
24

Deu. 16, 11
Deut. 24.

19
20
21

Iob. 29
The benifit

Thereof.

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3

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5

stope

- 6 stoppe her mouth that turnes the fatherlesse out of their
 7 owne : detest we such trechery that makes tuition a
 8 broker for priuate gaine : and take we heed of hipocrisie
 9 that secretly deuoures where it pretends deuotion ; and
 in steed of Children makes slaues or spunges of their pu-
 pils : I would our *enclosers* could wash their hands from
 this sinne , and do not *guardians* of wards trample deepe
 herein? We let vs not hie by examples but by lawes ; & let
 good example prouoke vs to the obedience of them . *Mor-*
decai takes vpon him the tuition of this orphan ; now let vs
 see what successe he hath herein , it followeth .

Verſ. 8 : *And when the Kings commandement , and his decree
 was published, and many maides were brought together to the
 palace of Sulhan vnder the hand of Heghe: Hefter was brought
 also vnto the Kings house vnder the hand of Heghe the keeper
 of the women.*

In which words the holie Ghost setteth downe a se-
 cond meanes, by which *Hefter* is aduanced to the Court,
Namely she is taken in the generall suruay, according
 to the Kings commandement, and so together with those
 many other Virgins, that were chosen out by these Of-
 ficers out of all the Kings dominions : she is brought to
 the Court ; And so the Kings commandement and the
 thorough execution thereof, is a second meanes of her ad-
 uancement.

And surely, if we consider the end of this commande-
 ment : *Namely* that the King might haue a wife : if we
 obserue the equity thereof ; that he might make choice
 of his wife where it pleased him ; throughout his domi-
 nions ; if we wisely examine the lawfulnessse of these Of-
 ficers imployment in this businesse, and successe therein :
 all these will witness vnto vs that *Hefter* had a lawfull cal-
 ling to the Court, the meanes of her aduancement were
 honest and honorable.

Shee is not thrust vpon the Court, to bee a prey
 thereto, neither doth she *basely* seek to it, to make sale of
 her chastitie, shee follows it not to catch a fall by it,
 but

but the court followes her, and seekes her out: As *Daniel* was sent for, and *Ioseph* fetcht out of prison, so she is sent for to the Court: GOD guiding the generall intent of the King to his perticular purpose; and so referring the issue to his speciall prouidence, that though shee might feare the worst, to become the Kings concubine, yet shee might hope the best, to be receiued as his wife: and so the case being doubtfull and the daunger not being inuincible; she was to cast her selfe vpon the prouidence of GOD, for a good issue of that which might threaten euill; as vndoubtedly perswading her-selfe, that as she beleeued, so it should come vnto her.

Behold then the mercy of GOD, in the aduancement of his Children: the meanes thereto shalbe faire and likely: *Hester* shall haue natures giiftes, to fit her to the Kings bedde, *Shee* shalbe seasoned with affliction to beare her greatnesse more wisely, *Shee* shalbe trained vp in religion vnder a gracious Tutor, that so hauing fauour with GOD, she may preuaile with man: And the authority of the Prince shall call her to the Court, that so she may be warranted both from God, and man; so was *Moyse*, *Mordecai* and the rest. And all this to two speciall ends; Namely that they may be cleered from ambition & intrusion, two encrochers on greatnes, and dangerous enemies thereto, that enuy may be remoued, the moath of aduancement, that pride may be abandoned which wil make their fall the greater: that hauing hereby an euidence of their holy entrance to dignity, they might haue better vse, and longer continuance thereof.

Vse 1 A notable lesson, for all aspirers, that they wait such holy and likely meanes, as GOD hath sanctified thereto, not thrusting themselues to preferment. Not hunting greedily after the same, not by base flattery, and detraction to cline into fauour: Neither by sordid corruption to blind-fold greatnesse. But wisely to esteeme their sinnesse by gifts both inward, and outward: and yet to wait

Obs. 67.

God aduanceth his children by faire and likely meanes.

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8 with comfort a lawfull thereto : *not neglecting such*
 9 *graciously opportunities* as GODS prouidence doth offer,
 neither *resisting* such *necessario means*, as may be vnlikely
 thereto.

For to examine a little further the case of *Hester* : the King commandeth ; must she not obey ? is it not lawfull for a subiect to come to a prophane Court ? is it vnlawfull for a religious person to haue her abode among the wicked ? especially, where the prouidence of GOD doth extraordinarily cast her, and no present iniquity lying therein ? A necessity lies vpon her and she cannot refuse. Surely Gods children are to yeeld to the necessity of more where as their is a prouidence of GOD to ouer-rule them to good : and our yeelding thereto, is not simplie euill. 1. *Because* all this while we keepe our selues within the compasse of Gods protection whereby we shalbe sure to be secured our selues.

Obs. 68.

Gods children
 are to yeeld
 to present
 necessity keep-
 ing them-
 selues from
 apparent euil
 and depend-
 ing on Gods
 protection.

2. *And what* know we also, whether the Lord hath herein a further worke to vse our Ministry for the good of others ? was it not so with *Hester*, *Daniel* and the like ? *If it shall be said* ; that the King had no good intent therein, because no doubt he ment hereby to supplie the number of his concubines, and it might haue beene *Hesters* lot, to haue beene one of them.

Surely this being but coniecturall, and the publike purpose of the King being to make choice of a wife : and God intending that purpose to preuaile, why might not *Hester* safely rest vpon this knowne purpose, and so commit her selfe into the hand GOD, for the issue thereof ? *If it shall be said*, that the best intent was bad ; namely that *Hester should marry an Infidel*. Surely as this cannot challenge the Kings purpose, which was simply to choose a wife, so neither may it preiudice Gods prouidence, who knowing what he would do, prouides this meanes to bring his purpose to passe : As for *Hester* this was more then yet she knew of (when she knowes of it you shall heare her Apology.) As yet she hath little reason of any
 such

such hope; and therefore she will herein yeeld to necessity; because the Lord might aswell preserue her vndefiled in the Court, as he had done before in the house of her kinswoman.

Use And therefore as herein she seemes to be blamelesse, because she yeelds that, which might turne either to good or euill when she could not otherwise choose: so herein she doth teach vs. An excellent point of wisdom in our obedience. *That* as we must obey rather God then man: so we must yeeld to man, when there is no apparant disobedience to God. *We must* not cast, what may be, seeing God may ouer-rule: lest while we nourish feare, we betray our faith: *neither must we demur* with our superiors, where our selues are *uncertaine*; but yeeld wee so to necessitie, that we still depend on *our God*: who will accept our obedience, and giue a good issue thereto. So did *Daniell* and God preserued him vndefiled. So did *Hester* and the Lord gaue a blessing.

And yet surely not without great difficulties and extremities: the nēer she came to it, the greater were her dangers: First, her bodie is in hazad by being left fatherlesse, God heere supplies and she is receiued into *Mordecaies* familie: who together with her bodie, prouides principally for her soule. Here she saies no, being where she hath greatest comfort, but shortly she is remoued out of heauen euen into hell, to a prophane Court she is called, where Sathan hath his throne. And to what end I pray you? surely *reason* and *likelihood* can giue neither, but to the apparant destruction both of bodie and soule.

Thus the nēer Gods children approach to their comfort & preferment; the greater are their dangers, the more desperate their extremities. So was it with the *Israelites* before their deliuerance. Their burdens were increased, their straw was taken away; and then came *Moyse*, then came the deliuerance. So was it with *Mordecai*, with *Ioseph* and the rest: And no maruaile?

Obs. 69.

God's children, the needier preferment the greater extremities.
Exod. 1
Exod. 5
Cap. 5. Heb.
Genl. 45.

For by this it appeares their promotiōs is of God, by how much the greater they finde the oppositions, to the same, that so hee may haue onely the glory of their advancement : *this* makes Satan to rage the more, that so if it bee possible hee may hinder the good of the Saintes : *hereby* the wicked are more confounded, in the disapoyntment of their mallice, and *hereby* GODS Children are better fitted to their preferment, and so are prouided to make better vse thereof.

Vse. *Whereby* as Gods children are taught not to bee discouraged, if their afflictions doe still increase vpon them, because if deliueraunce approach not, yet patience shall increase, to make the deliueraunce more glorious when it comes : *So are* they to increase their faith as their temptations doe increase, by more earnest prayer, and *examining of them-selues*, more *abasing them-selues*, and *increasing* constancy in wel-doing, that so they may hasten the worke, and bee fitted thereto.

Obs. 70.
God prepares
his church by
afflicts to
great blessings.

Thus was *Hester* brought at length from *Mordecaies* house to the Court, that in this fierie furnace (beeing thoroughly purged) shee might bee fitte for the worke that GOD had appoynted, so meruailous is the LORD to turne all things to the good of his children ; such difference doth hee make betweene them and the wicked, that as the best blessings doe make the wicked wise, so the greatest occasions of euil do make his children better, when necessarily they are cast vpon them.

And surely if wee shall wisely obserue the prouidence of God herein; that though *Hester* is brought to the Court, a place of liberty and prouocation to euill : yet shee is restrained in the Court, vnder the *hand of a Keeper*, and as it were clapt vp in a glorious prison, being not to come abroad, but when the King calls, nor to frequent any society, but such as is appointed her for her

her necessary attendance and comfort; doth not this exceedingly magnifie the mercy of GOD, that vseth this as a preseruatiue against the infection of the place, and so euen therein sanctifies her comming thither? Had shee beene exposed to the liberty of the Court? might accessse haue beene free vnto her? As her tryall had beene the greater, so her danger must needs bee the greater.

And therefore behold here the faithfulnessse of Almighty God to his children; that, considering whereof wee are made, and what wee can indure, though hee cast vs into the Furnace, yet he quallesies the rage of the fire, or else applyeth preseruatiues that it shall not hurt vs. So doth hee here provide for his seruant *Hester*, because her beautifull youth beeing exposed to applause and liberty in the Court, might be a meanes of tayingnting her; therefore hee makes the place of her aduancement, the place of her imprisonment, that so the *lust of the eye* and *pride of life*, and such like temptations might want their nourishment, and so without wood the fire might be quenched.

So when the Lord had brought *Ioseph* into the land of his aduancement, that the pride and fulnesse of the Country might not corrupt him; Hee is cast *first* vpon *Putiphers familie*: Where though he receiues no small preferment, yet it is sauced with such temptations, as might grieuously humble the heart of his seruant. And yet is hee further sent to the *prison*, where the yrons might enter into his soule, to his further humiliation: *Yea* when hee is aduanced, hee hath an *Office* to humble him, whereby hee is both kept from the Court, the place of temptation, and also from idlenessse the roote of all euill. And was not this a great humbling to *Hester* in the flesh, that her glorious beautie must bee pinned vp from being seene? shee must bee kept as a prisoner, where libertye was so pleasant, And yet the worke of the Lord

Obf. 71.

God breakes
the force of
temptations
and provideth
preseruatiues
against them.

most admirable herein ; both to keepe her flaxe (as I may say) from the fire, and by a lesse affliction to preuent a greater.

1 *Vse.* Oh that wee would therefore praise the Lord for his faithfulness and obserue his gracious prouidence in the qualifying of our temptations!

2 That we would rest vpon our God , in the greatest
3 extremities , and wisely admit lesser chastisments to pre-
4 uent greater. *Surely* there is no temptation hath ouer-
taken vs , but such as appertaineth to man , and God is
1 Cor. 10. 13. faithfull , which will not suffer vs to be tempted above
our strength : but will euen giue the issue with the
temptation , that wee may bee able to beare it.

And therefore admit the worst that may be sayd in this
case : Say it was her great affliction to bee brought to
the Court ; and her greater affliction to bee in danger
of defiling : and therefore her infirmities to put her selfe
into this danger (although I cannot see how she could
auoyd it) (so desperate is their case liuing vnder pro-
phane gouernement) yet seeing God brings light out
of darkenesse , and turnes our infirmities to his glory
and our good : Nay seeing hee iustifies particular actions
by extraordinary instants , which wee being ignorant
off , are therefore to keepe silence in : why shall we cen-
sure that , of the ground whereof wee may bee igno-
rant ? Why doe wee not rather giue our God the glo-
ries , whereof the infirmities of his children , raiseth
meanes for their strength , and hereby makes way for his
absolute glory ?

Well thus wee haue heard of some of the outward
meanes of *Hesters* aduancement. *Namely* Mordecaies
nourishing of her , and her *bringing* to the Court. Now
lette vs further consider of her intertainment in the
Court, and so of some meanes whereby she fitted is to the
marriage bed. *It followeth:*

Voc. 9.

*And the maid pleased him, and she found fauour in his
sight*

fight and to shew that he was pleased, hee caused her thinges for purification to bee given her speedily, and her state and seauen comely maidens to bee given her out of the Kings house, and he gave change to her and to her maids of the best in the house of the women.

In which words the holy Ghost setteth downe vnto vs a third steppe to Hesters aduancement. Namely, that she findes fauour in the sight of the Keeper of the Maidens. By which meanes it was likely that the King beeing much ledde by his iudgement and commendation, would cal for her more speedily to his presence, and so consequently preferre her.

And there is in the word contained two speciall thinges. i. The fauor that Hester findes with the Eunuch, testified by a variety, and increase of speech; not onely the Maide pleased him (but) shee found fauour in his sight. 2. there are set downe the vndoubted signes of his fauour in that liberall and extraordinary allowance which hee affordes her for her maintenance, in the rest of the Verse.

And surely that shee findes this extraordinary fauour in the sight of the Eunuch, who was likely to be a meanes of her speedy aduancement.

This magnifieth the gracious prouidence of Almighty God, who hauing the hearts of all men in his handes to dispose them as hee pleaseth; doth therefore incline the heart of this stranger, to affect this beautifull maiden, that so shee might haue more libertye in this time of her restraint; and more security also against such dangers as such places doe threaten.

So gracious is godlyntesse euen in the eyes of the wicked, so doth the Lord still sort the meanes for the effecting of his righteous will; that the weakenesse of our faith might be supplied hereby; and he might haue the glory of his truth and faithfulnessse.

2. Use. Whereby we are taught as to shew fauor vnto strangers.

Obs. 72.
Gods children find fauour in the eyes of strangers.

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- 2 strangers, and such as are in affliction. So not to despaire
the reconciling most bitter enemies, seeing our God can
make this *Eunuch* to affect a poore captiue, how shall
not he also turne the hearts of our enemies towards
vs. And therefore let vs not prouoke an enemy by vp-
3 brayding to keepe him further off, but rather draw we
him nerer vnto vs by praier, and kindnesse. Labour we
4 to please our God, so shall his heart be turned towards vs.
5 And make we much of friends, seeing the loue of ene-
mies is so doubtfull. Especially, make we much of the
6 household of faith, who when they wound vs do not
meanelly befriend vs, and yet thats the greatest enmity we
feare from them. As for our enemies they shalbe
7 cloathed with shame, and though they shall iustifie vs so
farre forth as may make for Gods glorie and our good,
yet this shall make to their further condemnation, that
they shall like of those, whom they do not desire to bee
like; they shall loue vs for such blessings as GOD be-
stoweth on vs, and yet not loue God with vs that they
in like manner may be blessed.

Well thus *Hester* finds fauour in the eye of this *Eunuch*: But how doth this appeare? It followeth. *He makes hast to giue her things for her purification*: he is not kinde in shew, but he performeth it in-deed: and that we may know his willingnes, he causeth it to be done *speedily*, yea he *enlargeth him selfe*, and euen stretcheth his authority; he increaseth her attendance, and *giues her seauen comely maides out of the Kings house*, yea he gaue charge to her and to her maides of the best in the house of the woman; and all this to make good the truth and greatnesse of his fauour towards her.

Obf. 73.

Wicked haue the shadowes of many excellent vertues and may in some sort teach true kindnesse.

Thus euer the wicked haue their shadowes of excellent vertues: yea they haue some reliques of the true inconstancies required therein. They are not onely kinde in words, but they make it good in deeds: yea they are *chorefull* in welldoing, and *bountifull* therein.

Vse 1. Which though it will not any thing iustifie them but

but rather tend to their greater condemnation : because they foolishly content themselves with this dimme light of nature: which onely concerns this present life, and will not embrace the light of grace, which would lead them to glory. Yet shall euen these Gentiles condemne many Christians, who as they vsually *boast of false liberality* : making great shewes in words, and performing little in deed : So when they do any thing the Children of God tast least of their bountie: they of all other are shut from their fauours : nay I would the worst they could do were not good enough for them: I would they *thought they did not God good seruice* when they entertaine his Saints with greatest outrage. Surely though religion must not teach them to fauour their contraries, yet wisdom might lesson them, herein to prouide for themselves. Do not they fare the better for the Saints of God? and shall they fare the worse by them? will they remoue them out of the gappe, who keepe away their scourges, and are the onely meanes to maintaine their prosperity? Oh that the world would learne to be wise! but he that is filthy wilbe filthier still.

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Ioh. 16. 1

Lastly from these shadowes of bounty we may learne the true substance thereof. Not onely *in words but* in deed to make good our kindnesse, and that not *forcibly*, or with *grudging*, but cheerefully; and that not *sparingly and basely* but bountifully and with a large hand : and if wee shall doe this from the true *ground because GOD hath commanded*; and to a right end, namely that God may be glorified, and our neighbours bettered, there shall not be any thing wanting to true liberality: but of this heretofore. That which may further be commended in the *Ennuch* is his faithfulness in his office. In that he makes not private gaine of such prouision as was allowed to these Maidens, but rather enlargeth himselfe in the true bestow- ing thereof.

Obs. 74.

Markes of
true liberality.

Obs. 75.

Officers are
to be faithfull
in distributing
according to
their charge.

So was *Ioseph* faithful in distribution of the corne: so was *Jacob* faithfull, ynder his ynkle *Laban*. A notable president

to

Obfer. 71.
Officers are to
be faithfull in
distributing ac-
cording to
their charge.
A good leſſon
for iuſtices,
Captains, Gar-
dians for the
poore, Treas-
urers of pro-
uifion for the
publicque
good. &c.

to all officers, that are put in truſt for the behoofe of others that they lick not their own fingers, & fil there own rooſes with that which ſhould ſerue for the prouiſion of others.

Vſe. 1. Which as it condemneth all *Zibaes*, and *Iudaſſes*, that caried the bagge for their priuate profit, and like falſe ſtewards rob others to prouide for themſelues ſo it aduiſeth Princes to appoint ſufficiēt ſtipēds for ſuch kind of officers, y they need not fal to ſuch ſhameleſſe oppreſſions. And alſo teacheth ſuch perſons to be content with their allowance, & to eſteeme it their greateſt glory, y their charge-proſpers vnder them, leaſt y leane kine deuour the fat, the wrongs of y oppreſſed cry for vengeance againſt them. That ſo honorable an attēdance is graūted to this poore captiue, who ſo lately liued at y beſt but a ſeruant; in the houſe of her vnclē this as it ſerueth much to y commendation of the Eunuches bounty, in whoſe power no doubt it was to haue contented her with one, ſo doth it much more commend the mercy of God vnto this his ſeruant: that in this glorious ſeruitude ſhee there hath this benefit of ſuch ſociety which as ſhee might better rule, hauing ſerme power ouer them, ſo ſhe might leſſe feare, as being of her owne ſex: which as it might giue her ſome hope of her further aduancement, as being yet a further ſteppe therto, ſo therein we may obſerue the wiſedome of our good and gracious God, who as he doth not ſuddenly caſt his vpō preferment, but by degrees raiſeth vs thereto, that ſo we might the better wield the ſame, ſo in this manner of his prouidēce doth he much quickē our faith and patience, that ſeeing him comming wee might not be haſty, but wait the good time that he hath appointed. Concerning y kind of attendance that here is tendred to *Heſter*, only ſuch of her ſex as being fitteſt thereto: this howſoeuer in this caſe might haue iealoſie for it ground, yet hath it a good ground for the like fitnes in our attendance, that they ſhould be ſuch as be of our owne ſex. *the eie of the ſeruant to looke vpō the hand of his maſter, & the eie of a maiḏe vnto the hand of her miſtreſſe*, a matter politickely obſerued in popery to take away ſuſpicion, at leaſt of ynclēanes yet ſurely euen this

Obſ. 76.
God raiſeth
his to prefer-
ment by de-
grees.

Obſ. 77.
Attendance
what fit for
each ſex.
Pal. 126.
Obſ. 78.
God giues
ſignes of his
fauour to his
children

this policy shal cōdemne that prophanes, wher there is not this care of fitnes both to preserue order, & comelines in the family, and also to auoide occasions, and apparances of euil.

Lastly that to *Hester* and her maides is giuen charge of the best in the house, howfocuer this may be imputed to the carnal & blind affection of the Eunuch, respecting especially herein the beauty and likelines of *Hester*, yet we may herein behold a special point of Gods wisdom & *Hester* being aduanced to the highest dignity, might haue a pledge hereof in the best preferment that the Eunuch could giue her, and so by this liberall and surable maintenance might be fitted thereto. So shal not the children of God want signes of their faith, to helpe there weakenes, & confirme their faith, wher-
by we may learne as not to desire a signe when the thing is before vs, so not to refuse a signe whē God offers it vnto vs, and wisely to obserue & traects of Gods prouidence, which will not fayle vs with plaine signes of his loue towards vs.

And doth not this also commend the exceeding faithfulness of God vnto his; that as all is theirs in Iesus Christ, so they about any other, shal so farre enioy this right, euen in this life as that the best and fatteest shal be their portion. So had *Iacob* and his famile the best of the land of Egypt: so had *Iacobs* posterity the most fruitefull country of the world: so haue & Saints of God had this their right renewed that the Gospell hath taken place euen in the best inheritance, what country may compare in happines with those where the word hath beene enterdayned? So righteous is the Lord to giue his children the best in this life to assure vnto them the enioying of the better, so profitable is Godliness to be recompenced with the best gaine: haue not the children of God shared euen with the best & of the best? shall not the widow giue the Prophet before the releuee her selfe? Shall not *Ioseph* haue the next best chariot, and *Mordecai* the horse that the King rides on? Ob that we could beleue, how should we be established! How should wee enuy the best if we could hope the best, that our iniquities did not many times depriue vs of the best: that the world should thinke the worst to good for the best.

Surely

Obse. 79.

The best is due and bestowed one Godschildren.

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5 Surely though wee haue not the best in it selfe, yet con-
 6 tednesse may make it the best to vs: *And if we be faithful* in
 7 vsing the least, we may by Gods mercy attain to the best:
 8 let this be our comfort that wee shall haue whats best for
 9 vs: and therein if wee liue by faith, we may take hold of
 the best inheritance: *onely* waite we the Lords leysure, and
 hee will giue vs our hearts desire: and resigne our selues
 alwaies into the handes of our most gracious father, who
 only knoweth whats best for vs.

Well thus is *Hester* now prouided honourably for in \S
 house of the maidens. How doth shee now behaue her
 selfe to keepe her in fauor? *Doth* she reueale her country,
 which was odious to these Gentiles? *Doth* shee conceale
 her religion, which was to these abomination? *Or* doth
 shee sal to temporising after \S manner of the Court? *Doth*
 shee forget her former affliction, and so grow headstrong?
Doth shee now hauing changed her keeper, change her
 obedience? Hearken I pray you what the holy Ghost saith
 of her.

Verf, 10.
 Verf, 10.

But Hester shewed not her people nor her kinned: That is
 she did not make knowne that she was a Jew; nay she did
 not discouer she was *Mordecaies Kinswoman*.

Wherby it is apparant that it was not yet knowne, so
 the reason of this concealment may be coniectured to be
 this; *namely* that had *Hester* yet bene knowne to be a Jew;
 she might instead of good intertainment, receiue both dis-
 honour and disgrace too; as beeing in regard of her coun-
 try most abominable to these Gentiles. Reason therefore
 she might haue to conceale her country, and surely such I
 take it as may stand well with religion. Which though
 it inioyneth vs a true profession of truth in the simplicity
 of our hearts, when wee are to giue an account of our
 faith: it allowes vs also in spirituall wisdome to conceale
 the truth, when it may stand 1. with Gods glory, 2. the satisfi-
 fying of others, 3. adsecuring of our selues, 4. without the
 preiudice to the truth, and iust scandall to our profession,
 especially when we are not questioned thereof. So doth

Obf. 80.
 Truth may
 be concealed
 how, &c.

Samuel

Samuel and *Moses* concale part of truth: So doth the *Exod. 9.*
Prophet Elisha concale the whole truth; when meeting *1. Samuel, 16.*
 with the messenger of the *Kings of Syria* who were sent
 of purpose to seeke him; instead of telling them, that hee
 was the man (which hee wisely concales) hee tels them
 that that was not the way, nor that the Towne, in all
 which hee spake truth; but if they would follow him,
 hee would lead them to the man they sought for. So doth
Hester here wisely concale the truth, *because shee* is
 neither demanded the matter, and the concaling therof
 would further her safety; And surely as none is to bring
 vnecessary troubles on himselfe by reuealing of what
 may bee lawfully hidden; so by such concealments both
 much glory hath redounded to the truth, and also Gods
 Children hereby refused to better times: and therefore so
 we intend not to smother the truth by our present con-
 cealment thereof, but only to refer the discouery to it fit
 opportunity: so we are not ashamed of the truth of God, but
 onely concale it that it may not bee reproached: Some
 do not by silence betray the truth, but rather by this holy
 wisdom keepe it from treachery: So we deny not our pro-
 fession, but only defend our person: So we indamage not
 our neighbour by concealing the truth: So we intend not
 only the auoyding of danger, but rather purpose to do the
 most good hereby. Surely vpon these grounds (I take it)
 truth may be concealed, especially if it be a truth concer-
 ning only ciuill occasions. And this was the case of *Hester*
 in this place: she concales not her religion she denies not
 her profession; but onely not being demanded, shee re-
 ueales not her country nor her kined, both ciuill things.

Obiect. If it shall be demanded how she could concale
 her country, seeing her diet and religion which could or
 should not be hid, must needs declare it though she hold
 her peace (as *Daniel* and his followers euen by this were
 necessarily discouered) And therefore it was ynpossible to
 concale her country: vnlesse you wil say, shee framed in
 her diet an outward ceremony of religion, to the present

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Contents to
 be obtained
 in concealing
 the truth.

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time, & so she would proue no lesse then a deep dissebler.

Ans. Surely as wee may not in any case iustifie dissembing, so I doubt not but we may very well cleare *Hester* from the same, if we consider that in some things, her diet might be answerable to the place wherein shee liued (the *Jew* agreeing with the Gentile in the promiscuous eating of the most things) and so by γ her country might not be discouered. The greatest doubt is concerning her religion:

Doubt.

how shee could conceale her country, vnlesse shee also concealed this; and if she concealed her religion, how she could practise it: which (in my opinion) may be easily resolved, if we consider her present condition, who liuing priuate might wel performe her deuotiōs, and yet not be obserued, especially hauing now no other meanes and liberty to practise her religion, but such as might well be performed secretly in her closet, onely in the presence of her God. If it shal be imputed vnto her, γ she should haue made a bold profession of her nation and religion, therby the rather to free her from that present bondage, and so to prevent her future defiling, rather choosing to be disgraced and cast out of the Court again, then to indure γ pleasure of sinne for a season.

Obj. 81.

Religion
when & how
to be giuen
account off.

1. Pet. 3. 15.

Surely concerning the profession of our religion, as γ Apostle would haue vs principally readie thereto, that so in due season we may publish the same: so he seemeth to aime at a speciall season, namely when we are demanded a reason of our hope. And therefore though no doubt this seruant of God was ready to giue an account of her religion, yet (I take it) now it was not a fitt season, because she was not demanded the same of any: If you say, her own case did now especially require it, γ she might be deliuered from γ imminent danger. Surely for any danger wherein yet she was, I see not but she was to vndergo the same with patience: as being so farre subiect to gouernement, as might stand with the saluation of her soule: as for future dangers, concerning her defiling, &c. though they were likely in regard of man, yet if wee looke vp to God, might

might not they be preuented? Especially seeing she walked on her wayes, she yet did no more then *necessitie*, and her *durie* imposed vpon her: and therefore might safely waite vpon the protection of her God: That happily she did not here abstaine from all *appearance of euill*, that shee did not auoid the occasiōs thereto; this being a thing that was not now in her choyce, as wee may not rashly condemne her for the same, so what know we whether by some extraordinary instinct, shee was incouraged and warranted herein. So that in her *that* may be iustificable, which of vs simply is not to be imitated. And surely the weakness of *Hester* must needs commend highly y^e faithfulness of God to his children, who as he is not diuerted from his purpose towards them, by their infirmities, so doth hee in his special prouidence vse the same in the contriuing of his work, y^e he may haue the only glory of the accomplishment therot.

Obs. 82.

God vith the weakness of his children in the accomplishment of his mercies toward them.

Vse. 1. VVherby wee may learne that there is a time to hold our peace as wel as to speak, & when we may safely conceale a truth. 2. We may obserue the bounds of lawfull subiection, that we so far obey the magistrate as may stand with the safety of our soules. 3. VVe may contemplate y^e absolute power of God, in giuing his children extraordinary dispensations euen beyond his righteous law, that so we may not feare y^e pardon of our sins, if in weakness they be committed against the law of God. Lastly, we see here an holy vse of our infirmities; *not* that wee should presume here-vpon to sin: *But* rather that hereby our faith being increased we may get dayly from Christ Iesus more strength against sin, *not* measuring Gods faithfulness by our desert, but by the eye of faith, looking for light out of darkenes, that so God may haue the glory of all his mercies. Thus doth *Hester* conceale her country and her kindred too. But by whose aduise doth she this? *It followeth.*

For Mordecai had charged her that shee should not tell it.

Lo here the cause of *Hesters* silence: her *softer-father Mordecai* had giuen her this in charge: & among many other holy instructions, which he had furnished her withal, that so she might be better armed against the abuses of the Court: this was one especiall, that shee should rule her tongue, and especially herein impose silence on her selfe, & she discouer not her Nation, nor her fathers house.

Obs. 83.

Gods children
season one a-
nother with
graue counsell
& wholesome
instructions.

Wherein, 1. wee may see a notable practise of the Saints of God, *Namely* to season their tender plants with good counsell, and wholesome instruction: when they are to leaue the wing (as wee say) and trye the world. So doth *David* counsell *Salomon*; and *Ioseph* his bretheren; so doth *Jacob* his children. This is the best legacie they can bequeath vnto them: hereby they shew & vnfainednesse of their loue, and so arme them gratioussly against this present euill world.

Whereby we may learne to sette forth our children, and friendes into the world: not so much prouiding stockes, and such furniture for the body, as especially with good counsell to arme the soule; as knowing that if it be secured the other shall not want, and the full prouision for the body, may bee a meanes to expose the soule naked to all temptations.

Iacob, 3.
1 *Iacob.*

But what is the summe of this councill that *Mordecai* giues to *Hester*? Surely 'silence, the chiefe outward ornament of women and keeper of their chastitie, the gouernment of the tongue (that vnruely member) which if we re-fraine not, our religion is in vaine; and to rule it well, is a note of true profession.

Obs. 84.

Silence a spe-
ciall lesson to
be learned of
Courtiers.

Wherin as we see the fitnesse of this Christian councill, VVhat fitter lesson to a woman then silence? So we may learne hereby the necessity of this vertue, especially when wee come abroad in the catching and obseruing Court. VVhat more safe for a man here then silence? where euery word shal be scanned, and happily peruerter? what greater wisdom here then silence? where & wisest speeches go not without their censure? what greater gaine heere then silence

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silence? Whereby a man may learne, and make vse of all others speech, that so when he is called, he may speak with authority.

Vse. And therefore lette not impudent beggers heere continue still crauing, vpon presumptions that the Prince will neuer be weary of giuing: *Lette not discourfers* runne them selues out of breath at tables and chambers, to make others sport and them selues a marke for euery mans tongue: *let not cōplementers* account it their glory to prattle of euery thing, when they make no conscience to practise the best things; *let not flatterers* trust to this same glibbe & slippery meber: to whom being so deeply indebted, they must look to make paiment, and happy are they if shame & repentance wil cleare the score: what should I say? *Let not Carry-tales* and *Detraitors* hope to carry it away cleanly; seeing their own tongues shal one day cry quittance with them: But let al remember *Mordecaies* lesson to *Hester*, y in the Court they rule their tongue, and so shall they bee sure to keepe their friend. But what end doth *Mordecai* aime at in this his lesson of silence? Surely his heart was touched with the care of the Church, for he saw a greater storme like to come in vpon it: He feared least *Hester* by this dis-vnion might indanger the same: he hoped that her wise silence for a time, might breed good blood for it deliuerance: and therefore doth he aduise her, especially, silence in this case, least her discouery might bee a meanes of indangering the Church of God: As beeing that which the enemy lay in wait for; and to which her weaknes & youth might be easily abused. Wherein wee may obserue what principally ought to affect vs, & danger wherof we ought especially to preuent: *Namely* the Church of God and its successe.

1. *Thus* doth our god principally regard, & so should we haue the like respect of it. 2. *On* the wel-fare hereof depēds al our priuate happines: and therefore if we be wise, we wil herein be wise to our selues, 3. *yea* our care hereof wil be meanes to cōfort vs in our troubles, & make way for our

Ohf. 85.
The safety of
Gods church
ought to be
our special
care.

4 deliuerance; yea which is especially to be regarded of vs,
our zeale to Gods Church witnesseth our true interest
therein; that if we mourne with it, we shall also reioyce
therewith; and so raigne for euer asliuely members
of the same in glory. So was *Nehemiah, David, Iosiah* and
the rest.

*Psal. 42.
130.*

1. *Vsa.* What shall we then say of those that neuer take
thought for Gods inheritance? Lette it sinke or swimme
its all one to them: *What* case are they in that drinke
their wine in bowles, while *Ioseph* is in affliction?
3. How fearefull is their condition that helpe forward the
affliction; reioycing greatly at the Churches fall? And
with all their strength and pollicie cry it downe
to the ground; But of this wee shall haue fitter
occasion to speake heereafter, when wee consider of
Hamans and *Mordecaies* contrary affection heerein.

Thus you see the care of *Mordecai* for the Church of
God: and to this end you haue heard of his charge to his
Nephew. Now let vs see how *Hester* obeyes this iniunc-
tion: It is said that

*Shee did not shew her people nor her kindred .i.
shee was obedient to the Councell of her Father
Mordecai, and doth not discouer her country nor
her Fathers house.*

Obf. 86.

Obedience
to lawfull au-
thority, a true
marke of the
Child of god.
4. *Sam. 15.*

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A notable marke of the true childe of God: Name-
ly in lawfull things, to bee obedient to superiors com-
maunds; 1. *So* hath God commanded; 2. *so* shal we pro-
long our daies, 3. *so* is corruption humbled and patience
tryed, 4. *so* is faith exercisied, and order maintained. 5. *so*
is God honoured better then with sacrifice, 6. and man al-
so by obeying more honored then if he could commaund
obedience. In a word, where obedience is, there is safe-
ty, and all prosperity: but confusio followeth disorder and
disobedience: *What* may we then iudge of those y^e iustifie
treason and rebellion in inferiours? *that* allow the subject to
rebel against the Prince, yea to take his life from him?
that warrant the childe to forsake their parents, and
iustifie.

iustifie disobedience in al sorts: shall we think y^e this proceeds from an *heroical spirit*? Shal we esteem it as greater obedience and honour vnto God? who because hee is obeyed aboue man, therefore wee must not obey man in him, & vnder him? So the *Papists aduance their traitors & iustifie their treasures*: Surely *how* necessarily must these erre, not knowing the Scriptures? *how* fearefully do these reiect God in not obeying his ordinance? shall wee looke that God will honour them that doe thus dishonour him? Blessed bee our GOD who hath maintained his own cause, and hath iustified his ordinance in the confusion of his enemies. So lette all thine enemies perish oh Lord, so bee thou exalted in the protection of thine Anoynted.

But wherein doth this obedience of *Hester* shew it selfe? *Obs. 87.* Surely in concealing a secret not fitte to be known; No doubt her father had giuen her many other good lessons, & happily among so many, she might haue forgottē this; or happily she might haue dispensed with it, as a matter of no great consequence; and seeing it was a thing would not be long hid, why might she not preuent the discoury thereof by others, and so make her own peace by the benefit of such fauours w^{ch} were cast vpon hir by s^r Eunuch and such like? neglecting the estate of the rest of her country. Surely (I take it) herein we may obserue the *consequence of her obedience*; that though shee might haue thus strayed in the poynt, yet the reuerent authority of the commander keepes her from these demurres, and so not so much shee considers the waight of the thing commaunded; as that she is simply led by the authority of her superiors.

Sincere obedience rather respects the power of the Commander then the worth of the thing commanded.

A notable euidence, of the sincerity of our obedience, that it depend not so much vpon the thing commanded, as vpon the iust authority of the commander him-selfe: *because* as our seruice is then most acceptable to GOD when it hath least respect to our selues, and most to his glory, so it is most free from mercenary basenesse

when we stand not so much vpon the thing commanded which doth concerne our owne good; as vpon the power of the commander for whose sake we do it.

Thus did the Lord trye the obedience of our first parents, the things he commandes might seeme to bee of no great waight, but that the Authoritie and commander gaue power thereto: which they not wayghing duely (as in conscience they should) but principally respecting what a smal matter was only imposed; not to cutte of an *Apple*: were therefore easily drawne to very fearefull disobedience; and so haue sette their childrens teeth on edge, by eating that forbidden fruit.

- Use. 1.* Whereby wee may learne, how to certifie our obedience. *Namely* to haue an especiall respect to y^e iust power of the superior, and so in reuerence of that power,
- 1 to yeeld obedience to his righteous commaund: *not making* difference thereof, in regard of the things comanded, but performing indifferent obedience to al alike; as they proceed from a like power of those whome God hath set
 - 2 ouer vs: *making* conscience as well of the least as y^e greatest commaunds; because the Commander is the same,
 - 3 and his power as great in the least as in the greatest: *And* our faith and humilitie beeing more tryed in obeying the least, will be a good meanes to further vs to preferment,
 - 4 that so not obeying man for hope of reward; we may not yet be disapointed of our hope in the reward aboue. Thus doth the Lord approue the sincerity of *Hesters* obedience. Vnto which if wee shall adde that which further is remembred in the 20. *verse*, that *Hester* did euen as conscionably after the wordes of *Mordecai*, beeing now from vnder his gouernment, *as when she was nourished by him*: We haue herein a further testimony of the vp-rightnesse thereof. The holy Ghost (as I take it) signifying herein vnto vs the maine ground of her obedience: *Namely* that though shee was now exempted from the sight and gouernment of her earthly father *Mordecai*, yet shee remayned vnder the obeysance of her heavenly

Father

Obs. 88.

True obedience performed as well in absence as in presence.

Father : For whose sake shee performes as conscionably obedience to *Mordecai* being absent, as if he had hit vnder neuer so much subiection. *So doth* she approue her obedience to bee in the sight of God, and *so is* cleared Col. 3. 22. from eye-seruice, and such like; *so doth* she witnesse it also to be for the Lords sake, and so purgeth it vtterly of all carnall respects: And in this her bodily absence performing as true seruice vnto *Mordecai* as if he were present; *shee retaines* her right in the holy family, and so is partaker of the prayers, and blessings thereof. Yea *shee* keeps hereby within the couenant of God, and so prepares a way for further blessings.

Behold here a patterne of sincere obedience: And doth not the Lord requite it accordingly? Yea surely, as *Hester* obeyes *Mordecai* when he is out of her sight; so doth *Mordecai* care for *Hester* though now she be from vnder his gouernment. For so it followeth.

And *Mordecai walked euery day before the Court of the womens house*, to know if *Hester* did well, and what should be done with her. Thus carefull is he of his Nephew euen when shee is of yeares to gouerne her selfe. Vcrs. 11.

So ought parents not to reiect the care of their children, euen when they seeme to haue least need of them: *Obf. 89.* Because 1. as hereby they shew the soundnesse of their affection: so this riper estate of their children, doth now far so extend their care for their children Parents how
most require this care, as exposing their children to more fearefull extremities, as now knowing their strength, and so now strong to do euill. And wherein shall earthly parents better resemble their heauenly Father, then by continuall loue and care of their posteritie? Nay how shall they otherwise differ from bruit beasts, if they onely care for their children to hatch them vp, & so send them forth into the world; and there's an end. Had not *Iob* a dayly care of his children, though in regard of the world, they had no need of him? Because the more they had of the world, the longer they had liued therein, the more they were subiect to greater danger? what care had *Naomi* of *Iob*. 1. Ruth, 1.
her

her daughter in law *Ruth*? how did *Moyſes* take care for Gods people when they enioyed great prosperity?

Uſe 1. Wel let *Mordecai* condemne prophane parents that thinke much to glue their Children euen bringing vp, if they haue done this, they thinke they are fully diſcharged; eſpecially if they can prouide them ſome trade, or portion to get a liuing withall: Alas if they conſidered well, the greateſt care is behind; when do children more grieue and ſhame their parents, then at this eſtate? when they come to their owne liberty, and haue fuel to their luſts? and how many iuſt curſes doe lie vpon parents, not for giuing too little, when they were Children, as for giuing to much libertie, when they haue growne vp to be men.

Obiect. If you ſay they are now paſt correction, they are better able then I, wherein then ſhould I ſhew my care?

Anſ. 1. Surely *giue* good example vnto them, that ſo they may be ordered. Let them be often in thine eye, that ſo thy preſence may awe them; *Spare* not to reprove them plainly, and forget not inſtruction as occaſion ſhalbe offered. *Keepe* them to the duties of children, without reſpect of their age, or riches: ſo ſhalt thou keepe thy iuſt authoritie ouer them. *Keepe* the ſtaffe in thine hand, and let their maintenance come from thee. Let the Magiſtrate helpe thee if correction here be needefull: But eſpecially craue helpe of GOD, that his bleſſing may bee vpon them.

Obſer. 89.
Care how it
may ſtand
with the pro-
vidence of
God,

But what need *Mordecai* take this care of *Heſter*? was he not perſwaded that GOD would care for her? *Yea* ſurely, and therefore alſo is he carefull for her, becauſe he knowes the prouidence of God to ſubordinate ſit meanes. And who more fitte to care for her then he that had bound himſelfe thereto? So then an honeſt care ſtands well with Gods prouidence and faith therein: as whereby we both ſhew our ſincere obedience in vſing ſuch weake meanes as are ſubordinate thereto, and ſo

so auoide security and presumption; two maine enemies of our most holy faith.

Use 1. Which as it condemneth their presumption, that cast all vpon God; neglecting the meanes: So on the other side it reproveth their carnall confidence who rest all on themselves and shut out God; The meane which (I take it) is to bee observed herein, is an obedience to Gods commandement, to watch circumspectly in our callings, 1. *casting* about the best meanes, and 2. *caring* to compass our desires, that we *neither* tie 3. the issue absolutely to our labour, but referre it wholly to the blessing of GOD, nor 4. *sacrifice* to our care, as if by it we had obtained, nor by it make 5. *sacrifices* of our selues to Satan in our cruell macerating of our selues to *impotency* and *distrust*. But as we must 1. care, to be humbled thereby; so we must also cast our 2. care on God, for he careth for vs, 3. *contemning* our selues that we haue done our best, howsoever happily it may haue bad successe, and being 4. *comforted* further also in the greatest plunges, because our GOD shall turne all to our good. Thus doth *Mordecai* giue God the glory of his faith, while yet he shewes his loue to his kinswoman. And doth not the Lord giue a gracious issue thereto? Consider I pray you what followeth next.

12. *And when the course of every maide came to go in to King Ahasuerus after that she had bene chaste.*

In these three next verses, the holy Ghost sets downe the abominable custome of these maidens; in their preparing to the Kings bedde; and also, their admittance to the same.

Their preparation is set downe by two circumstances, First by the continuance of Time which was allotted for this preparation: It was no lesse then *twelve moneths*. 2. It is also described by the *meanes* thereof, and those are of *two sorts*. The first is ordinary, and this also is two-fold, they must be *anointed* and *purified* sixe moneths, with oyle of mirrhe, 2. and the other sixe monethes with *sweet odours*, and in the purifying of the women.

The

The extraordinary meanes that is allowed for their purification, is here described indifferently: Namely whatsoever any of the Virgins did otherwise require, to set out their beauty, and steale away the Kings heart, that must also be giuen vnto them.

The maidens being thus prepared, are in the second place, admitted to the Kings bed, and herein also we may obserue two circumstances.

1. The time of their admission, a very short time: *In the evening shee went and on the morrow shee returned &c.*

2. The condition of her admission is here also commended, vnto vs. Namely that when euer she returned, *shee came vnto the King no more except shee pleased the King and were called by name.* This is breiefely the summe of these words.

Obfer. 90.
A marke of
the wicked to
riot out time.

Wherein that no lesse then a yeare must be spent in fitting these miserable Virgins to the lust of the King, doth not this set out vnto vs, his most prodigious luxury, and profusion? doth it not discouer such effeminatenesse, as cannot well be deciphred? May we not herein obserue a note of desperate folly thus to riot out time in vanity? May we not set it downe as a marke of him, that knowes not GOD, that he makes no conscience of the redeeming of the time, but rather imployes his wits and wealth in the spending and wasting thereof? Surely if time be in *this regard* most pretious, because the Lord therein offers vs a pearle of chiefest price, no meaner a Iewell, then the saluation of our soules? Must not saluation be farre from them, that neglect so gracious opportunitie? can they be accepted of God, that refuse this acceptable time? And is it not more then madnesse thus to riot out time which is not ours to dispose, but in the hands of God? can we be excused when the bride-grome shall come on the sudden? *Not so*

Times porti-
on.

1
2 Cor. 6. 2.

Pro. 1. 24. 25

2
A& 1. 7.

Vse. Oh that we were wise to consider these things! that our Time-keepers would lay it to their hearts: what a heauy wittnes time wilbe against them, when neglecting the

the Jewell thereof the saluation of our soules, they are on-
ly slaues to the corruptions of time? *Did our gamesters*
wisely consider of this, that together with their *wisdom*, and
money, and *honestie*, they also play away their *time*, that
most pretious time which can neuer be wonne againe:
surely they would labour with God, that he would teach
them to *number their daies*, that so they might apply their
hearts unto wisdom. And shall not time be a witnesse a-
gainst our wordings, who haue no leysure to come to the
marriage of the Kings sonne? but all time is to little for
their farmes and for their oxen? *What shall I say to our pro-
phane Elawes*; that say it is not yet time to build the house
of God? good time enough behinds for the saluation of
our soules: Let vs be wise, and take the time while wee
may: let vs looke to the maine chance; Let our owne
houses go forward: *What is this birth-right to vs*? shall we
die for hunger? *hearken how our voluptuous persons*, haue
disposed of time? *At all times let thy garments bee white,*
and let no oyle be lacking upon thy head. Let vs eate and
drinke, for to morrow we shal die: soules take thy ease thou hast
goods laid up for many yeares. Shall not the Lord of that
seruant come in an houre when he knowes not? shall not
he say, and make it good, *thou foole this night shall thy soule*
be taken away from thee? But why speake we to the bellie
that hath no cares? Surely the voice of Time yet was in
our streets and the man of wisdom, shall heare the name
of God. *Oh yee foolish how long will yee loue foolishnesse?*
Why doe yee lay out silver and not for bread? Why do you
spend your time, and strength, without being satisfied?
Say not with thy selfe, yet a little sleepe, yet a little slum-
ber? put not off (as Felix did) til a more conuenient time?
Oh boast not of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what
a day may bring forth! rather admire the mercy of thy
God, that thou art not alreadie consumed: and seeing the
Lord hath spared thee, to recouer what thou hast lost, Oh
thinke it sufficient that thou hast spent the time past, after
the lust of the Gentiles: the more time thou hast lost, the
more

2

Pla. 90. 12.

3

4

Eccle. 9. 8.

1 Cor. 15. 25

Luk. 12. 20.

Math. 6.

1 Pro.

Eisy 55. 2

Time how to

be redeemed,

Pro, 6

Eccle. 5. 12

Lam. 3. 13. 1

more doe thou labour for the time to come and redeeme thy time with the price of thy former pleasures *Account* daily with thy selfe how thou dost bestow it, and esteeme euery minuite pretious that is offered thee, and be sure thou seeest therein an image of eternity. And considering that the patience of the Lord doth lead thee to repentance, make no long tarying to turne to the Lord thy God, least abusing his patience, thou harden thine heart, and though thou cry after, yea bitterly as *Eſau* did, yet the Lord will not heare thee, because thou wouldst not heare him. Oh that we were wise to consider these things ! But they that are filthy will be filthier still.

Obs. 91.
Another
marke of the
wicked to riot
out Gods
good creatures

Behold his drunkenesse added to thirst: you haue heard how these Princes Minions spend their time, a whole yeare at least must be spent to fit them to vncleanesse, that so they may more desperately follow the same all their life long. And shal they only giue an account of *ſ* mispending of their time ? No surely: what is there that escapes taynture by this abuse of time ? The *soule* that is hardened and made impudent in sinne, the body is made a factor and baud for sinne, the *good creatures of God* are made fuel to sinne, heer's no sparing of cost to maintaine sinne : All the creatures of *God* are to little in this case, but that *Art* also must be made a broker euen to corrupt nature (*six moneths with oyle of myrhe*, and *six moneths with sweet odors*) and such other purifyinges as do belong to women. No end of excessse *upon pretence* of our right in the creature: *No end of abuse* to condemne our vsurped power ouer them : so corrupt is our nature to abuse our liberty, so *iust* is the Lord to turne our liberty to our further condemnation ; that the creature abused, being subiect to vanity, might cry vnto the Lord to be eased of the burthen, and so hasten vengeance vpon the wicked, while they heape abuse vpon the creature.

Vſe. 1. A notable euidence of the fearefull condition of the wicked, who in the iudgement of the world seeme therefore to be most happy, because they haue most commaunds ouer

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3
4
Rom. 8. 19.
Iol. 1.

ouer outward blessings. Whose great liberty on the creatures, prouoking to greater abuse, doth *either* thereby moue the Lord to cast out such *Nebuchadnezzars* as beasts in this life, and to strippe them of all, or *elſe there continuance* in these blessings, encreasing sinne vpon them, doth thereby further vengeance against the day of reckoning. A thing which because the wicked cannot auoyd as vsurping ouer Gods blessings, and therefore necessarily making them strangers vnto them. *That we* may therefore auoyd running into the same excesſe; let vs labour to be in *Chriſt*, that ſo we may haue a right in these things, and *let vs* renew our right by prayer and holy imployment of them in our ſeueral callings, that ſo we may attaine to a right vſe of them, *frugally* husbanding them as the good blessings of God, and vſing them *ſoberly* as hand-maides to higher graces, that ſo we may lay vp a good foundation by them, and alſo giue *a cheerefull account* for them at the day of Chriſt Ieſus.

Dan. 4.

How to pre-
uent abuſe of
the creatures,
2. Cor. 4. 17.
1. Tim. 4. 4.

1. Tim. 6. 19.

But is there no colour for this great exceſſe? might not this be imputed as a *complement of ſtate*, that theſe maidens ſhould haue ſuch exquisite preparations, becauſe it was for the moſt excellent perſonage? might not *ſeemelineſſe*, and *necceſſity* be here pretended, that they might be offered ſuly and vnſpotted to the bed of a King? might not *liberty* be pleaded, and therefore who ſhall reſtraine? might not *ability* be auouched to iuſtifie this coſt? Surely the greateſt finnes will haue their cloakes, *pride* muſt go for cleaneſineſſe, and *exceſſe* muſt keepe ſtate, the *cleaneſing of the body* muſt be with the deſiling of the ſoule, and *luſt* will haue a law to enrage and prouoke the ſame. *Thus* are the wicked deceiued, while they deceiue others, thus are they *hardned* in their ſinne, while it hath a cloake to keepe it from ſhame: *Thus* pretending what they may doe, what euill will they not proſecute with greedineſſe, ſeeing power is in their hands, and ſo ha-
ving made vp the meaſure of their ſinne. bee ſuddenly caught

Obſ. 92.

The wicked
haue pretences
for their greateſt abuſes.

caught with destruction, while they say peace and security. 1. Thess. 5. 3.

³ *Vse* 1. Oh that we would trie our selues whether we stand in grace or no! To sinne is naturall, but to cloake sinne is diuelish. And therefore though outward ability may afford meanes of such excesse; yet the *ability of the minde* should temper such meanes, for the good of both; and though it be lawfull for me to take my fill of Gods creatures, yet *expediency* will moderate as may best fit me to glorifie my Creator: And what should *necessity* do with such *superfluity*? what seemelineesse can their be where Nature is thus adulterated? As for complement of state to be furnished hereby, what greater abasement of state then to be a slaue where it should rule? and what more enthralls greatnesse then abuse of it power, then excesse in it libertie? Let vs therefore cast away these cloakes of shame; and in the feare of GOD, learne we an holie and sober vse of the blessings of God, let not *examples* deceiue vs, nor *libertie* enthrall vs: *let not necessity* make vs *wantons*, nor *fulnesse* make vs *miserable*. But vie we the blessings of GOD to the *glorie* of the giuer: Let our *callings* be the *measure*, and our *saluation* the *end*, let *necessity* bee the *mo-
tine*, and true *liberty* the *moderator*: Let experience be the *Iudge*, and *edification* the *marke* we aime at: so shall we vse aright the good blessings of God: and being faithfull in a little, we shalbe made stewards of great blessings.

1 Cor. 10. 31
1
2
3
4
5
6
1 Cor. 10.
8 Rom.
Math. 25

Obser. 93.
The wicked
most eagerly
bent vpon
their lusts, and
spare no cost
for the saty-
sying thereof.
Egod. 32

Well thus we haue remoued these shamelesse vyzards, and pretences for this. Now let vs examine the true cause of this excesse. It followeth in the . 13. verse. *Whatso-
euer she called for, it was giuen vnto her to go with her out of
the womens house into the Kings house.* Lo here the maine cause of all this superfluity. It was to go into the house of the King, to satisfie his lust: And therefore spare no cost, let there be giuen what-soeuer is called for: So eagerly are the wicked bent to the satisfying of their lusts, so do they spare no cost, for the fulfilling thereof. Not their *eare-rings* and *bracelets* but shall go willingly to make the cause,

yea the fruit of their bodie, for the sinne of their soule. *Such* Mich. 6.
 paines do they take to increase their paine: so foolish are
 they to bestow such cost vpon so hard a reckoning. *And* 1
 yet how shall they bewray their loue to sinne, vnlesse it 2
 cost them thus deare? *How* shall they iustifie this vanity
 in the eye of the world, but by being at so great cost 3
 for it? if it were not worth it, surely such wise men would
 not lay out so much vpon it. It were not worth the ha-
 uing, vnlesse it cost them thus deere. *How* should they
 make others in loue with sinne but by prizing it 4
 so highly? *How* should sinne bee nourished, but by 5
 such aboundance of fuell? *There* credit now binding 6
 them, hauing laid out so much vpon it, to make the 7
 best of their bargain; *And* this cost, giuing for a
 time some miserable comfort in the sinne, that so
 they might at length make vppe the measure thereof.

Vses 1. Which as it condemneth that opinion of the
 world, that rich men are onely righteous, and onely the
 poore wicked; whereas rather these being not able to
 be at the cost of sinne, are so kept from it, the other ha-
 uing where-withall, are the likelier chapmen: So it much 2
 more condemneth these badde market-men, who cast a-
 way their money on such trash as sinne is: yea hereby
 also do cast away themselues.

Surely if GOD be the bestower of those outward
 blessings, and to this end they were giuen, that he might
 haue the glorie: are not great ones here tied to Gods
 seruice with a greater bond? haue they not better meanes
 and leisure then others to intend the same? *And* yet 3
 this shall not excuse the poore, but they are badde hus-
 bands also: Though they haue not such meanes, yet they 4
 can bestow to much cost on sinne: they will bestow
 their Time, and whatsoever they haue: their wills
 are as good, though they cannot put it in practize;
 and what can the ciuill haue more then all that they
 haue.

Well let such consider of this, that thinke all cost to
 L little

1 Malacke

little for ~~the~~ seruice of GOD, that robbe the LORD in tythes, and offerings: that giue him but the lippes, and out-side in his seruice, that rent him in the power and plenty thereof, as if we could be to *righteous* or he too much serued, shall not the grosse sinner rise vp in iudgement against them?

Indg 17

But what? must these wantons haue whatsoeuer they call for? must they do what they list as (if their were no King in *Israel*) and yet doth the King commande it? doth authority allow such licence to sinne?

Obfer. 94.
Wicked Mag-
istrates giue
the bridle to
sinne, and
countenance
wickednesse
in others.

Behold here a note of wicked Magistrates, instead of bridling sinne, they giue the reine to it. *Else* how should their example bee warranted if they did not warrant others? *How should* they hope for the loue of their people, if they gaue them not this liberty, if they made them not like vnto them? *How* should they (as they thinke) keepe their subiects from plotting against them, but by drowning them, thus in all kind of filthinesse? *How should* they hope to rule them at their pleasure, if they did not thus in-fatuate and abiect them to all kind of pleasures?

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Thus doth Atheisticall policy giue liberty to sinne. But not I pray you to the confusion thereof? Let vs a little examine these grounds? must sinne be made common that I may goe vncontrouled? what extraordinary priuiledge and delight can I haue herein, (seeing I abase my pleasures as common to euery one? What security can I haue in the continuance of them when I haue so many sharers and spoilers thereof? Ought I not therefore rather restraints sinne in others, that so I may in them reforme my selfe? that my ill example may be better indured, when I am beloued not for my owne worth, but for conscience sake? surely euen a bad husband, will yet see his seruants shall worke, that so he may haue to maintaine his vnchristinesse with all: And shall I hope to bee beloued of my people by giuing that libertie which makes them hatefull to themselves, and vnfit for any duty where-by they might shew their loue?

Surely

Surely though by this meanes I make them like vnto me, yet neither is likenesse in sinne the ground of loue especially betweene the Prince and subiect, neither will fellowship in euill euer breede true loue, but rather ieaiousie and hatred are the hand-maides thereof. Remember *Ammons* loue to *Thamar*, and the issue thereof.

1 Sam. 14.

And shall euil be preuented by giuing the reyne thereto doth not liberty to sinne giue strength thereto, euen iustly to be auenged, of such foolish indulgence? It may be this licence may for a time abiect the subiect to a slauish obedience, and hauing made him a beast you may happily so vse him as your drudge and pack-horse, but if you tread on a worme to hard, he will turne againe: and while you hope the better to rule him by drawing him in pleasure, take heed you make him not more sauage and hard to be tamed.

And therefore if you plot for true loue and security of your states, *kisse you* the Sonne of righteousness, that your people may embrace you: *Giue lawes* that may breed feare, and *chase* away the wicked, by the power thereof, so shall your thrones be established in iustice. So shall the righteous dwell in peace, and shall bleesse your gouernment. This shalbe the meanes to preuent al conspiracies, when the Keeper of *Israel* watcheth ouer your Kingdomes, and knitteth the hearts of your people towards you, and by this you shall learne to be mercifull to your beasts, much more to your subiects, that they may cheerefully obey you. Thus ought Godly Princes gouerne their people: But as for our *Persia* Monarch his lust is his law, and his belly his God, and therefore no mannaile if he do after his kind, and in his greatest wisdome hasten his owne destruction.

Obser. 95.
Princes how
to secure their
estates,

For to come now to the issue of all this preparations of all this libertie and abuse of GODS creatures: Is it not to prouoke the lust of this Epicure, and so to wast his bodie, and destroy his soule? yea surely, the

holie Ghost witnesseth no lesse , in that which followeth.

Verf. 14

In the euening shee went and on the morrowe shee returned, into the second house of the women vnder the hand of Shaaahgaz the Kings Eunuch, which kept the (concubines: shee came in to the King no more; except shee pleased the King; and that she were called by name.

Iob 24.15

In which words the admission of these maidens to the Kings bedde is declared vnto vs: and, *i.* the Time of their admission is specified, *in the euening shee went, and on the morrowe shee returned* that is to say, She is, to goe in the euening, as fittest for a worke of darkenesse, the eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, he is ashamed of the light, he feares it will bewray him. And her pleasure continues but for a night: so momentary are the pleasures which the wicked do enioy. So iust is the LORD to confound their vaine confidence, that while they promise to themselues perpetuities therein; they both presume of more then the nature of their pleasures can performe, and are preuented by Gods iustice confounding the same, euen in their greatest likelihood and ability thereof. *Luk. 12.20.*

Obfer. 96.
The pleasures
of the wicked
very short
and slippery.

Vse 1. And shall we set our hearts on that which is such a stranger vnto vs? So daungerous in the vse? So fearefull in the change? *Shall* we to catch these shadowes; forsake the substance? shall the pleasures of the right hand which last for euermore, shall these (I say) be disclaimed for these pleasures of sinne which endure but for a season? *Shall* we thinke our selues vnhappy because we drinke not of these broken miseries? *Shall* we esteeme those blessed that abide in such slipperie places? *Shall* we not rather choose with *Moses* hauing an eye to the recompence of the rewarde? *Ought* wee not the rather to secure these slipperie Estates by sanctifying them daylie in an holie vse thereof, and readinesse to forgoe them, when the LORD shall call?

Iere. 2

Psal. 73

Hebr. 11

But

But is there not a mistery in this, that the *Virgin must come in the enening, and returne in the morning*. She must stay but a night, *lust must haue change*, that it may be satisfied, and *change hath a sore* with it, to consume the body, and so to be auenged for the abuse of this liberty.

Obser. 97.
Variety in sin
the greatest
snare thereto.

So wise are the wicked for the maintenance of sinne. *So lust* is the LORD, in *confounding* this their wisdom, as making it the meanes to hasten their destruction. So is the Epicure met withall in the variety of his dainties, so is ambition tangled in the stirrups of her climbing, so variety of meanes to sinne, is the snare thereto.

1

2

Vse 1. And may not they then be condemned of extreme follie, which thinke it pleasantest swimming; where there is many baites? they may bee here, or there: what liberty is this?

2. Is not their madnesse intollerable, that when one is to much to choake them, will be nibbling at them all day, will swallow them greedily, as if they had found great spoiles. Surely such is the case of the *Whore-maister*, and *drunkard*: such is the *ambitious* person, the *conceited*, and oppressor: such are all they that delight in sinne, these must haue variety, that their confusion may be the greater. *Oh* let vs not therefore binde sinnes together! *Let* vs feare such baites as may further change in sinne. *Let* complementers looke to this, and *factors* for other mens sinnes. *Let* vs single out our sinnes that we may the better ouer-maister them. *Let* vs not seeke after greatnesse, which may yeeld vs this libertie: *But* rather pray for superiors that haue such baites to sinne, *And* not liue by examples, which may so dangerously corrupt vs.

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Well thus we haue heard what short *pleasure* this poore maiden hath had. Now let vs heare a little of her paine. It followeth. *Shee returned into the second house of the women*: that hauing made sale of her honesty, and so changed her happie estate of Virginitie to become a

Obs. 98.
The wicked
fall deeper
and deeper
into sinne.

Reasons 1.

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Concubine, she changeth' also her *habitation*: And whereas before she was in the house of the Virgins; now she is remoued to the house of the women; such as had left their honesties behind them, *that here* among fellowes in euill griefe might be prouoked, and yet notwithstanding she might be hardened in her sinne; as being here like to finde companions therein, & so miserable comforters to excuse and iustifie the same. So cunning is Satan to maintaine his new gotten hold: So vnthankfull is sinne to recompence our seruice with shame and sorrow, So desperate is the condition of the wicked, *they sinke deeper and deeper*: So iust is the Lord in their appointed condemnation, that neither *shortnesse* of pleasure, nor *change* thereof into sorrow; nor *disgrace* of men, nor *sting of conscience*: nothing shall stay the wicked, in-deede nothing can stay them, till they haue made vp their measure, that God may powre on his.

1. Well let this aduize vs not to beleue the faire promises of the world; the best recompence she can yeeld vs when she hath made vs serue her lust, is to thrust vs into the house of the women, to reape desperate sorrow for the same, or else to harden vs further therein, seeing now we are knowne to be but broken ware, here is the best remedie the world affords for sinne, euen to send vs to our like companions in euill: that so we may haue company to go to hell withall.

2

Who so is wise let him vnderstand these things, *let him* not hope to recouer out of sinne by giuing further liberty thereto through fellowshippe &c. *Let him* take heed of the house of the women, of pleasure, sencerity &c. such meanes as do harden. *Nay let him* not enter into his brothers house in the day of his humiliation: miserable comforters are these all.

3

Abac. 3.

Psal. 32. 5.

But let him go to his God, by true repentance, and *let him single* out the Lord, that so he may be more vile in his presence: so shall he finde rest in the euill day. *I saide I will confesse my sinnes vnto the LORD and thou* for-

forgauest me the iniquity of them.

But let vs a little further consider of that which followeth.

Shee came into the King no more, except shee pleased the King and, (this was a signe that shee pleased the King) if that shee were called by name.

Behold here a further euidence of the badde wages of sinne: This defiled woman must now burne in lust, and shall not be satisfied; to the King shee must come no more, but at a long leysure and for other meanes, the iea-lousie and honour of the Prince, and the watchfulnesse and safety of the keeper will looke to it soundly. What then is her punishment? surely not onely to be denied of that, which she most desireth, but by this deniall to be tormented with the rage of her vn-satisfied lust, to the great vexation both of bodie, and soule.

So is the *constraine* man tormented in the restraint of his vn-satiable desire; *so* is the proude man reproched because the world will not honour him; *so* is the Epicure punished in this life, by being giuen vp to such a desire of eating, that nothing can satisfie; *so* do the birds of prey euen die for famine. *So* patient is the Lord hereby to *pronoke* the wicked to repentance, *so* iustly doth hee *hasten* hereby their condemnation, because sinne restrained is the more enraged: *so* wisely doth hee discover hereby the vn-satiableness of the minde to sinne: *so* righteouslie doth hee seeke vpe into them, there eternall vengeance by this; that as their desire to sinne is vn-satiable, and in this life is restrained; *so* for this their infinite desire, they shall eternally burne in hell: where yet they shalbe viterly depriued, of all satisfaction of their lusts.

1. Oh consider this you that forget GOD, and

Obfer. 99.

The vn-satiableness of the wicked in sin hath this punishment attending on; it in this life that it shall not be satisfied.

Haman. 5.
Heller,

Aristot. et
Plin. de A-
quilis.

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Bi. h. 4. 19.
*Non cum sa-
 tiate, sed cū
 audiat in-
 dicat spiritus
 appetitu insa-
 tibile, nō sati-
 andum.*

2

3

Trou. 14-4

4

Vnsati-ble-
 nesse in sinne
 how to bee
 preuented.

5

Obfer. 100.
 The wicked,
 winners or
 looters fare
 the worse by
 sinne.

dead your consciences, that you may commit sinne with
greedinesse: you that enlarge your desires as hell, that you
 may take your fill of sinne: behold the more greedie you
 are, the lesse you shall be satisfied; euen no lesse then hell
 that neuer can bee satisfied. Doe you not see herein
 how sinne will owe you nothing? your desires shall bee
 laide open, how vnsatiable they are: and God shall giue
 you your desire, you shall not bee satisfied. And there-
 fore condemne not Gods iustice, but the vnsatiableness
 of your desire. Is not this a fearefull satiating of the wic-
 ked *with his owne wayes*? when hee shall not bee satisfied,
 wherein hee is vnsatiable, when his satiating in sinne
 doth make him more vnsatiable: how iust is it that offend-
 ers should burne in lust, and so bee deemed the comfort
 of mariage. *Ob leaue* therefore to purge the fountaine of
 this mischiefe, labour to preuent *vnsatiableness* in sinne,
 1. *purge* it from the *heart*, or else it must bee vnsatiable;
 2. *refraine* it in the *occasions*, which may breed a desire
 of vnsatiableness, looke to the *libertie* of sinne, that in
 giuing thee thy desire, shall nothing lesse then satisfie
 thee: *and consider wisely* the rest of sinne, euen *restlesse sor-
 rowment*, and yet neuer satisfied.

And seeing our desires in euill haue such ill successe,
 oh let vs labour to place them on the true obiekt; let
 Heauen bee our marke, and godlinesse our race: here
 wee shall bee satisfied, as hauing assurance by faith, and
 yet still desire, beeing ledde forward by hope, that so wee
 may at length obtaine the fulnesse of our desire, in the
 end of our faith, which is the fulnesse of ioy for euer-
 more.

Thus wee may see (for conclusion of this point) that
 whether the wicked winne or loose in sinne theres no
 gaine on eyther side. The *King* hee takes his libertie
 more freely, and is a looser thereby, hee encreaseth his
 sinne by abusing the chastitie of others, and putting off
 repentance by a new supplie; and his body also gettes
 nothing by the bargain: as for the poore *Coucubine*,
 her

her losse is apparant, shee parts full vnwillingly with the bed of her pleasure, and meetes vntimely with the house of her sorrow, *shee burnes* within, and *frezeth* without, the King hath so his desire that hee may be lesse satisfied; the Concubine hath not hers, and therefore is not satisfied, and yet the Lord most righteous herein: who in not giuing her her present desire, satisfies her inward and maine purpose, & by this meanes inflameth the same. namely neuer to be satisfied, but euer to burne in lust. *Let this* impose silence to all bragging of diminishing of sinne; the *begger* he flatters himselfe that hee is not prodigall, and the gelded person that hee is not incontinent: what gets hee hereby, seeing hee would be so? The great one he boasts that he steales not for neede, he flatters himselfe that hee hath enough to doe at home. what doth this aduantage him if he steale without neede? nay how shall we know hereby, but that he would if he had need: whether wee be restrained in what we would, or enioy our desire to the utmost: sinne got ground in both; the outward restraint encreaseth the inward desire, and the inward desire is also enraged by the outward accomplishment thereof. *Let vs* therefore labour first to rectifie our desires by the word of GOD, *labour* wee to haue our persons accepted of GOD, so sinne restrained, or committed, shall bee lesse desired. And so much concerning the abhominable custome of these Concubines. Now let vs see how GOD bringeth light out of darkenesse. It followeth.

Now when the course of Hester the daughter of Abihail the Uxkle of Mordecai, which had taken her as his one Daughter came, that shee should goe into the King, &c.

Vers. 15.

16

17

18.

In these foure next verses, the holy Ghost sets downe vnto vs, 1. the admittance of Hester into the Kings presence, 2. her aduancement to the mariage bed, and so to the

the kingdome, and 3. *the solemnitie* thereof. And that still wee may see the Lord is like himselfe in vsing fitte meanes to bring good things to passe: the spirit of God sets downe in this 15. verse, diuerse notable circumstances to shew the orderly and worthy admittance of this poore captiue to so great soueraigntie. First, it is sayd, *When the course of Hester came*, that is; shee is not hoysed on the suddaine, least shee might bee vnprepared, and puffed vp therewith: neither is she called *before her course*, least her fellowes might enuie her, as being griued at it: neither shall she stay after her course to put her out of hope: but euen in the fit time.

Obs. 98.
Gods children are advanced in convenient time.

When her course came, then is she called, then is shee advanced. So when his appointed time came, and the council of the Lord had tryed him, *then did the King send for Ioseph* and loose him, then was hee deliuered and made Lord of the house.

Thus hath God an appointed time to aduance his Children, which shalbe *fittest* and most comfortable for them, *that* they may know their advancement is not by chance but determined of the LORD: *that they might* wait with patience the LORDS good ley-sure, *and bee confirmed in faith*, for the accomplishment thereof.

Use 1. And therefore, *as in vaine* do the wicked threaten, (as if the times were in their hands) because *Eliab* shall prosper, and his word shall preuaile against *Iezabel*: *so weak* is the faith of GODS children, that will prescribe GOD his time: seeing when it is fittest then it shall come to passe, and art thou wiser then GOD? *Oh* that we would be still! and the LORD would establish our hearts? *that wee would fit our selues*, to the time, that God hath appointed.

Surely there is an end and thy hope shall not bee out of, yea the patient abiding of the righteous shall bee galdnesse.

Pro. 2, 18

And

And seeing the Lord will *not hide* from his children what may be for their good, and they that *live by faith* may see a farre of, though the times and seasons are in the hands of God, yet hath he not left vs without very probable markes, whereby we may discouer the time of a *deliverance*, that so we may be better fitted to the entertainment thereof and be confirmed in our faith, in the enjoying of the same: when the signes do graciously answer our expectation.

To this purpose is it, that as the Lord hath appointed a time when he will deliver his Church; so doth he also in the word discouer the same; and also not obscurely layes open the markes of his childrens apprehension thereof. And these are either in regard of *God who is* the deliyuerer, or in respect of *them-selves* that are to be deliyuered, or in regard of *their enemies* from whome they are to be deliyuered.

Obs. 102.
The appointed time of deliverance is not obscurely to be gathered out of the word.

Tokens
hereof.
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Concerning almighty God as he is the onely deliyuerer of his Church: so doth he commend him-selfe vnto vs by some speciall actions in the word; when he purposeth to deliver his people; while his people are vnder the burthen, he is said to be a *sleep* to forget them, to be *angry with them*, &c. not that indeed he is angry, but because he shewes such effects, which wee do being angry: neither that he forgets them, otherwise then not to answer their present desires, neither indeed is hee otherwise a *sleep*, then that graciously preserving them in the estate of their affliction, he doth not yet deliver them out of the same. But when the Lord purposeth to deliver his people, then the spiritt describes him in another manner. Namely that he *awaketh* and *rowseth up him-selfe* as one out of *sleep*, he *returneth to his people*, and hath compassion on them and he repents him of the euill. &c. And that we may know that the Lord is awake he doth manifest the same by many notable signes of his speciall providence.

1. In respect of
God.
Psal. 74.
Psal. 102.

Abv. 59.
17.
18.

As first he puts on righteousnesse as an habergeon & an helmet of saluation vpon his head: hee puts on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and is clad with zeale as a cloake. To what end? Surely to make recompence to requite the fury of his aduersaries, with a recompēce to his enemies, he will fully repay & llands; mark I pray you how the holy Ghost sets down the order of & execution of Gods recompence 1. *He makes inquirie* of the fury of his aduersaries, *he comes downe to see* whether they haue done altogether according to that cry against God and his children: *He makes inquisition for blood*, and remembers it: and forgets not the complaint of the poore. But doth the Lord make this inquisition? How doth hee approue the righteousness of the complaint of the poore?

Genes. 18.
Psal, 9. 12.

Psal, 44.

Exod, 5.
1 Sam, 24.
26.

Surely, 1, *By making it* apparent that his children for his sake suffer all these euills, in that neither would their enemies persecute them, if they would renounce their God, & yet they shall giue testimony of their righteousnesse, though for their credits they must still proceed against them. So was our Saviour Christ approued by *Pylate* & his wife: so did *Saul* iustifie *Dauid* and yet he continued persecuting of him: so haue Gods children bene iustified by their enemies. By which it commeth to passe that the more the godly are iustified, the wicked are more enraged, and so laye more grieuous burthens vpon the Church of God. What followeth here-vpon. *Now doth the Church of God increase her cries*, and so the Lord doth yet further shew him-selfe for & deliuerance therof. Namely he raizeth vp some *extraordinary Champions* to venture themselves for the reskuing of his people: Now stands vp *Nebemiah*, and now resolues *Hester*, if I perish I perish; Now is *Moyse* sent forth though sore against his will.

2
Iudge, 5.
Nchem, 2.
4 Hester.
Exod, 4.

3
Gen. 15. 14.
Psal, 106.

And wil not & Lord accompany these his seruants with extraordinary power? Yea surely: behold here a *third none when God will deliuer his people* (Namely hee will send fearefull signes into the *Land of Ham*, and shew his wonders in *Egipt*, and the *red Sea*, that so the wicked may bee compelled

compelled, to lette his people go: he will send Emeroids among the *Philistines*, and soare plagues vpon the vncircumcised, that so they may bee compelled to send *ſ* Arke home. Thus will the Lord *Iudge the Nation before he deliuer his people*; that their hearts hereby being hardned, & more indurate againſt God and his people, the deliuerance of the Church may be more free and glorious, and *ſ* confusion of the wicked more iuſt and fearefull. Thus doth the Lord awake and returne when he will deliuer his children, giuing them herein theſe apparant markes. Namely, *First The clearing* of his children by the mouthes of their enemies: *Second, The razing ſome* vp among them to ſpend their liues in his cauſe. *Third,* infllicting many ſecret and open iudgements vpon their mallicious enemies. So before he deliuered his Church from the tyrants of Antichriſt among vs, were not ſome of the persecutors made fearefull ſpectators of Gods wrath, to bridle or harden the reſt? And to iuſtifie the Church of God?

1 Sam. 5.

Genel. 15.
14.

Fox.

And ſurely if we do conſider the ſtate of the Church of God, when the Lord prepares it to a gracious deliuerance, we ſhall find many euident tokens therein: to giue good hope of the haſtning of the work: by which we may be confirmed in the expectation thereof.

a In regard
of the church.

To this purpoſe we may obſerue a different eſtate of *ſ* Church of God vnder troubles. *First, ſhe ſtandes* vpon her priuiledge, as if ſhe had wrong herein: *ſhe* looks to former times, and meruailes why ſhe is thus: *ſhe* growes impatient vnder the burthen, and complaines of her louers, that they haue deceiued her: *ſhe* diſſembles with God and ſeekes to humane helpers: *ſhe* yeelds to the preſent neceſſity, and ſo ſhe bowes her neck to the yokes, and her conſcience to the luſt of the oppreſſor: *ſhe* giues her moſt precious things for meat, and obieſting her ſelfe to the iniquitie of the time, ſhe giues ouer hope euer to riſe againe. Thus you ſhall find to haue beene the ſtate of the Church of God vpon it entrance into captiuiety: and ſo along toward the time of her appoynted deliuerance. As the

Prophets

Vid. Ierem, 41.42. Prophets do most liuely decipher the same: who liued with them in the captiuitie, and obserued their vse therof. And
 Lament, 2.3. surely if we obserue the prouidence of God herein: *doth it*
 1 Lamen, 11. not exceedingly iustifie this righteous had of god against
 Ezech, his church? *Doth* not the church of God hereby sink deeper in the myre, and so set her selfe more strongly in the bondes of Gods iustice, that so the time appointed of her trouble may be accomplished ouer her? *And doth* not the Lord admirably by this meanes bring light out of darkenesse, and so prepare his Church to her appointed deliueraunce? Yea surely the more Gods children wrestle with the rod, the more they are beaten, and at length tired therewith: and so in the end being thoroughly weary, & poore church of God would gladly find some rest. And seeing the *hope of the Hills* is but in vaine, and she findes it too true that her louers haue deceiued her: Therefore shee *resolues to go and returne to her first husband: to looke vp vnto the Lord and wait for God her Saviour*: Assuring her selfe that her God will heare; And being fully resolu'd that *if there be iniquity in her hand, the Lord will not heare her prayers*; therefore she purposeth to forsake her Louers, and renounce her sinnes. Heere is it, that shee *weepes continually and gines no rest to her eyes*, because the Lord hath forsaken his rest: And that her sorrow may be more kindly, and take deeper impression, Shee *remembers Syon*, while she sits in *Babylon: shee remembers all her pleasant things*, that she had in times past: And withall remembers her rebellion which was the cause of that great losse: And so apprehends her affliction from the cause and greatnesse thereof: Thus is shee brought to iustifie the Lord, *because shee hath rebelled against him*, And being sent out of her selfe by an holy dispaire, *acknowledging that she is worthy to be cutte off*: Shee recouers strength in God from her owne weakenesse: the more vile shee findes her selfe, the more shee striues with her God to restore her beautie vnto her, shee layes hold on GODS promises for the
consolation

Jerem, 3.

1 Lamen, 19.

Osea, 1.

Mich, 7.

Psal, 66.

Lament, 1.

Psal, 137.

Lamen, 5. 18.

1 Lamen, 7.

1 Lamen, 18.

Psal, 6.

Ezech, 8. 4. 5.

1 Lamen, 21.

12.

confusion of her enemies, and in their confusion sees a farre off her deliueraunce; here she staies not, but drawes nearer vnto God; and so yet further abaseth her selfe in the fury of her misery, and so farre she wades in the apprehension thereof as that she dispaire of Gods mercy; she concludes in her weaknesse, *that her strength and hope is perished from the Lord.* Being thus past hope, and so euen her spirituall weapons sayling her; now she is recovered by the Lord, & hopes about hope: she confirms her faith from former experience, and comforts her selfe in his true humiliation; and so gathers assurance *that the Lord wil not forsake for euer.* She is perswaded he will returne: she sees him comming a farre off: Here-vpon she prepares her selfe to meete her God by examining of her selfe, and trying her waies; she incounters her God by earnest and hearty prayer, though shee haue the repulse; yet she will haue no nay: *Her eye droppeth without stay, till the Lord looke downe and behold from heauen.*

Lament, 2.
Lament, 3.
Lament, 5. 31.
Lam, 3. 54.
Lament. 3.
23.
24.
36.
57.
58.
59.
31.
40.
41.
44.
45.

And considering the promises of God for the reseruing of the Church: she presseth the Lord to arise and haue mercy vpon Syon; and by the power of faith gathers y the appointed time is come. *That his seruants might delight in the stones thereof; and shew compassion vnto the dust of the same.* Thus is the Church changed and purged inwardly, that so shee may bee fitter for outward glory: And so being fitted, shee applaudes the time thereof, y not so much for her owne good, as for the glory of God, which shall be magnified in the restoring thereof. And from his own estate may the Church of God gather apparant notes of her deliueraunce.

Psal, 102.
14.
15.

Now if wee shall looke into the practises of Gods enemies: they will also teach vs to gesse at the time of the Churches deliueraunce. VVhen they make no spare of destroying, and will roote out *G O D S word*, then it is time for the Lord to put to his hand for they haue destroyed thy law, whē by their pollicy, & cruelty they haue made such hauock, that there is none to offer him-selfe in the cause

3 In regard
of our ene-
mies.
Psal, 119.

- Eſay 59. 16. cauſe of God : then ſhall the Lords arme ſaue it, his righteouſneſſe it ſelfe ſhall ſuſtaine his cauſe : when they ſhall open their mouthes againſt heauen , and blaſpheme the power and mercy of God. *Then I wil vp (ſaith the Lord) to auenge the poore, then ſhall the Lord be knowne by exempting of iudgements, the wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God : Yea, when the wicked haue made a conenant with hell, and ſo in their ſecurity do bleſſe their ſoules : as if they had Gods children ſo ſure , that none could deliuer them : as if their happineſſe were ſo ſure, that none could remoue them : Then ſhall a ſodaine deſtruction come vpon them: and they ſhall not be able to auoid it.* Then ſhall the deſtruction of the wicked bee the deliuerance of the Church. Thus euen from our enemies wee may heare good newes of deliuerance; their owne mouthes will tell vs , their practiſes cannot hide it.

A ſecond probabilitie of *Hesters* aduancement , is that ſhee is of the ſeed of the righteous , which ſhall be mighty on the earth; ſhe is ſay they , *The daughter of Abihail the Vncle of Mordecai .i.* She is a Jew to whom belongeth the birth-right , whoſe priuiledge it was to rule the Nations ; to whom *Eſau* and all his poſterity ſhould bow, and do homage.

Ps. lxxiii.
Obſ. 103.
 Gods children in this life aduanced to higheſt dignity.

- 1 *So faithfull* is the LORD in keeping couenant
- 2 for euer : *So truly* is Godlineſſe profitable for this life : *ſo*
- 3 *all are ours* both by right and poſſeſſion : *ſo are* Gods
- 4 children beſt able to vſe proſperity : *ſo is eternall* happines
- 5 hereby ſealed vp vnto them. So would the Lord hereby teach vs that theſe temporal bleſſings are not euil, becauſe he beſtowes them in greateſt meaſure vpon them. The vſes hereof ſee *Obſ.* 79.

Onely wee may not here forget what the holy Ghoſt vouchſafes vs againe to remember.

Namely, that *Hester was taken by Mordecai for his daughter.*

Thus the Lord thinks it fit againe to make honourable mention

mention of this charitable worke of *Mordecai*: As wherein he was glorified and *did delight therein* so confounde the practize of the wicked, that seeke to obliterate the same and to approve to his children the acceptaunce of the same, as also to assure them hereby of the reward to come, and *wishall* to prouoke the Saints to the imitation thereof.

The good
deeds of Gods
children are
not forgotten
of the Lord.

Oh how vainely then doth the wicked hope to put out their names from vnder Heauen: whose names as they are written in the booke of life, so their workes also are registered in the eternall word of God, *how wickedly* do they depraue, and obscure those gracious deeds, which the Lord of glory makes glorious by his remembrance? *how weak* are the Saints to doubt of their well doing, seeing the God of truth giues euidence thereto. *What comfort* may we haue in the acceptance of our labours, seeing the righteous Lord takes such delight in them? *how may* we be established against the reproches of the world? how little need we esteeme to *be iudged of men*, seeing it is God that approueth? who can condemne? *with what confidence* may we prepare our selues to stand before that righteous Iudge, who allready presents our prayers in the golden censer of his righteousness: and doth not onely make mention of vs, but mediation for vs at the throne of glory, that wee might not bee confounded in the day of refreshing?

1

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4

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1. Cor. 44.

6

Reue. 3.

A third likelyhood here set downe of *Heisters* aduancement, is her confidence in God and relying on his immediate providence, specified in this; *that it is said.*

She desired nothing but what Hege the Kings Eunuch the keeper of the women said.

Wherein the spirit of God would giue vs to vnderstand, that though the other maydens standing vpon there preferment, vsed all art to set out there beauty as the meanes thereof: and therefore spared not to demand of the Eunuch such meanes of painting, &c. as might further the same, yet this gracious virgin, contenting her selfe with y^e image which God had set on her,

M

and

and resting on the diuine prouidence, that had enclinde the heart of the Eunuch towards her: she doth not impudently presse him further then God should moue his heart: but humbly takes what *Hege* directs her to: who no doubt being enclined of the LORD to shew her extraordinary fauour; was also restrained of the LORD, that hee should not offer her otherwise then was fit for her profession. The LORD as it is likely, giuing her a like fauour in the eyes of this Eunuch as he gaue vnto *Daniel* with the other, that she was not defiled with this vaine and superfluous preparation, but as she was willing to leaue the Eunuch to his liberty, so the Eunuch also might leaue her to hers: how-so-euer, though in other things she might happily submit her selfe to the present necessity: as to take that which the Eunuch offers her, and so might discouer her weakenesse and want, of courage, yet in this doth her faith appeare not obscurely that she doth not ambitiously seeke by corrupt meanes to aduance her selfe: but soberlie entertaines the meanes that are cast vpon her, resting on GODS prouidence for the good successe thereof. And surely (as I take it) wee may here obserue diuers notes of a liuelie faith.

Obse. 105.
Gods childrens preference is in faith.

Sect. 1.
3 Notes of faith.

One is that she presseth not impudently to insinuate into the fauour of this wicked Eunuch, though by the Kings authority shee might haue occasion thereto, lest shee should seeme to depend vpon him and giue him some aduantage ouer her pretious liberty; To receiue what is offered by him, especially moued thereto by the LORD, herein shee shewes her faith; which knowing all was hers, doth herein take her right, and shewes her power therein, in that shee refuseth not her owne, though tendred by the wicked, Shee knew the prophaneesse of the Eunuch could not make GODS blessing ineffectuall to his children; And therefore shee receiues them aright; though from an vnjust possessor. And lastly in that she useth such ordinary meanes

as were offered, not seeking to aduance her-selſe by adulterating, or prophaning of nature; herein alſo in the third place ſhe ſheweth her faith, which as it refuseth not meanes, ſo it is not curious of meanes; but takes what are offered, reiects ſuch as are not warrantable.

Whereby we may learne that the aduancement of Gods children is warrantable and for their good, ſeeing it is in faith, and hereby to try our ſelues whether we be in the faith or no.

A fourth token of her aduancement is this which followeth.

Note of Heſters aduancement.

And Heſter found fauor in the ſight of all them that looked vpon her.

Thus did the Lord make her gracious in the eyes of all men that her aduancement might be with more power, and leſſe enuy: both for her owne and the good of others, that ſhee both to the wicked might be a great terror, as being conuincd with the brightneſſe of maiesty appearing gloriously in her, and the Godly might haue a more gracious protection of her, yea her owne ſlippery eſtate might hereby be the better ſerued.

And ſurely; howſoeuer it be the property of GODS children to be hated of all men, yet is not this incident vnto all, or not at all times. Some may be exempted by ſpeciall preuiledge: All at ſome-time ſhall haue a generall approbation. So had our Saniour fauour with GOD and men, who after was hated of all and forſaken of his owne, ſo when the waies of man do pleaſe the LORD, hee will make all his enemies at peace with him: either they ſhall willingly approue him, or GOD ſhall extraordinarily bridle them: So doth Heſter here finde fauour in the ſight of all, not that happily ſome one might not repine at her: but generally the moſt part applauded her beautie, the LORD turning their eyes vpon her,

Obſ. 106.
Gods children
gracious in the
eyes of all men.

Math. 10.

and their hearts toward her.

The speech I take it is hyperbolically; we being by the vniuersall to vnderstand the most, or better sort, who giuing her intertainment the inferior durst not openly gaineſay. And yet more likely for *Hester* to be applauded of all: because, as there was that apparent which might set the eyes of all vpon her, and moue their hearts towards her, namely her beauty, so that was concealed which would haue made her hatefull, namely her religion and country; especially wee are to ascribe this to the ouer-
ruling hand of G O D, who thus giues her fauour generally with all, that so her fauour might be more easily perceiued, and constantly maintained with the King, who the rather would affect, where his people liked, and was likelier hereby to settle his affection, and so to continue it to *Hester* for the good of the Church. Howsoever for the comfort of G O D S children let mee adde this further, that though it be our lots generally to be hated, yet they that cry. *Crucifie him*, shall before cry *hosanna*, euen they shall be conuinc-
ed in conscience, that wee are to bee approued, yea their owne mouthes shall giue testimony vnto vs, if it shall then bee demanded: why they doe after hate vs, the reason is plaine, because as they loued vs, to make vs like vnto them, or to like of them: that so the may fare the better for vs; so when they see that we neither like of them, nor can be like vnto them: therefore they speake euill of vs, therefore they hate vs. Thus do the wicked loue vs, before they hate vs. And doe they not also approue vs euen while they prosecute their malice against vs? yea surely though they *think* they do God good service, while they thus hardly entreat vs, yet in that they persecute vs, they shew we are not of them, we are contrary to them. And do they not herein wonderfully iustifie the generation of the iust. Nay would they not fetch vs againe, when they haue made vs away? do they not approue vs when they haue made

Obſe. 107.
Wicked why
haue Gods
children
bring forced
to approue
them.

1. Pet. 4. 4.

Iho 16. 2.
Ioh. 15.

a riddance of vs ? else ; *Why doe they build the tombes* Math. 23. 29. *of the Prophets: and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous: 30.* and say if we had beene in the daies of our Fathers, we would not haue beene partners with them in the blood of the Prophets: What can we haue more ? seeing they that hate vs do thus approue of vs ? Is not the LORD wonderfull to cleare vs by the mouthes of our enemies ? may not the Children of God haue this testimony to be approued of all ?

And surely if we consider the power of GOD ; who hath the hearts of all men in his hands , if wee obserue neither *bountie of Godlinesse* , which is able to rauish all: *If wee* wey the priuiledge that the Children of GOD haue , that all shall do seruice vnto them : *If wee* apprehend the purpose of GOD herein , to make the world more inexcusable ; wee shall finde it no hard matter with Gods Children to be approued generally, and haue fauorable respect of all that looke on them.

And therefore as this may serue to commend the greatest Godlinesse , So it wilbe a heauie witnesse against the vngodly that hate where they should loue. *Oh what* comfort is here to Gods Children that the world shall iustifie them ! *What vantage* haue they of the wicked whose tongues shall condemne them: elues to iustifie the righteous ? *May wee* now hope to finde such fauour as will serue the turne , when GOD at his pleasure , shall turne all hearts towards vs ? *And shall* we then make ship-wrack of a good conscience to winne the fauour of men ? Is there no way to bee gracious with the world but by doubting with it ? Oh that we would trie God in this case ! how should we preuaile with men ?

Well , what may we learne further out of this point, that *Hester* being to be aduanced is thus gracious in the eyes of all ?

Surely ; that such as are to be in authority, and raised to greatnesse : they are to be gracious in the eyes of their

Iacob.
Gene. 33.
Obs. 108.
I rine's were to
be grati-us,
in the eyes of
their people.

people : *hereby* the Lord approues their gouernement : and so knitting the heartes of the people vnto them, confirmes and establissheth the same by this meanes : the blessings of gouernment are plentifully inioid on either side ; The Prince rules in loue , and the people obey in truth ; and both subiect and people are prepared to eternall happineffe.

Ob that Princes would wisely lay this to their hearts! and by what means. That they did know that the loue of their subiects is the best maintainer of the Crowne and armor of the Prince:

- 1 Surely they would labour to gette and increase their
- 2 loue, *by* requiting ingenuous seruice, and *accepting* it
- 3 cheerefully; *by* *prizing* highly the liues of their people,
- 4 and *preseruing* their Christian liberty aboute their liues.

- 5 Thus may Princes bee gracious in the eyes of their
- 6 people, if *they estrange* not them-selues from them, nor
- 7 vse them as strangers; especially if *they* make them gracious in the eyes of God, by giuing good examples vnto them, and prouiding for their instruction in the word of life.

Thus is Hester gracious in the eyes of all men. VVhat followeth here-vpon?

Verse, 16.

Namely; *So Hester was taken vnto King Ahasuerosh, into his house royall in the tenth month, which is the month. of Tebeth, in the seauenth yeare of his raigne.*

Obs. 109.

Gods children are not alwayes vnder the rod, but at length find deliuerance from the same &c.

In which words the spirit of God sets downe the receiving of *Hester* into the Kinges house, and the time thereof : that so this great benefit might bee the rather remembred.

And that this miserable captiue is now taken to the royall Pallace of this great Monarch, and after many changes, and remouings from *Mordecaies* house to the house of the maidens, is at length brought to a place of rest and honour : Doth not this commend vnto

vs the exceeding faithfulness of God, that will not suffer his children alwayes to lye vnder the burthen, and continually to passe through fire and water, but at the length will bring them to a wealthier place. Psal. 66.

Did not *Ioseph* at length see an end of his troubles? Was not *Mordecai* quiet at length? Did hee not finde rest and honour? *Yea surely*, the Lord is mercifull, and will not alwayes bee chiding, because mercy pleaseth him: *he will returne* and haue mercy, that his people may gloryfie him. *The rod of the vngodly* shall not alwaies rest vppon the lot of the righteous, least the righteous put forth his hand to wickednesse. *The Lord* will heare the prayers of his children, and *he* will make them hidings for others, that are in trouble; *they shall* haue gracious experience of his mercifull deliueraunce, that they may bee more willing to committe them-selues to him in well-doing, and so be better fitted to their eternall rest.

Loe thus shall the man bee blessed that seareth the Lord. *Reioyce not therefore* against me oh myne enemies, for though I fall yet I shall rise againe. Oh that wee could wait the Lords leysure and hee would establish our hearts; *marke well* the iust man, and the end of that man is peace. *Faint not therefore* vnder the burthen, *neither* repine thereat, for thy Sauour Christ doth beare the waight thereof: and at length he will ease thy shoulders of all; sorrow may be in the euening, but ioy is in the morning. *I sayd I was cast out of thy sight*, yet will I looke backe towards thy holy Temple: *For a little while did I forsake thee*, but in euerlasting compassion will I gather thee againe, though I utterly destroy al the nations where I haue scattered thee, yet wil I not destroy thee; but I wil correct thee by Iudgement and not utterly cut thee off: But I will guide thee by my counsell, and after bring thee to glory.

Thus is *Hester* now receiued into the house-royall of the King. *The Lord* hath sette her up, and not suffered her foes to triumph ouer her, and because she beare of his seruants trusted in the Lord and in the mercies of the most high:

Psal. 112.

therefore shee shall not slide: her heart is established in the Lord her God: and therefore shee will not feare untill she see her desire vpon her enemies.

Dan. 1.
Math. 26.
A.C. 2.

And is not so great a blessing worthy remembrance? yea surely, the holy Ghost precisely sets downe the day and yeare thereof: that so we might be prouoked to remember the same. And might learne that such blessings ought so long to be remembred of vs, as the daies and times continue in our vse. So hath the Lord tendered great blessings to his Church, at especiall times. *The returne of the captiuitie* in the first yeare of *Darius*: *the passion* at the feast of the passe-ouer: *The gift of tongues*, at the feast of pentecost &c.

Heli. 9.

Obser. 110.

Great mercies of God are to be had in remembrance by special time appointed thereto.

1. That the extraordinarinesse of the time, might put vs in minde of the extraordinary blessing, and be a continuall remembrance of the same for the praises of God. So hath the Church of God appointed and set solemne times for the perpetuall remembrance of great blessings: and commended therein the celebration of Gods blessings, for euer, so was the 14. day of *Ader* set apart to this purpose by *Isaer* and *Ardecas*: so is the 5. of Nouember consecrated to the remembrance of the most admirable deliuerance of the *Britains* State and people from the gunpowder treason. And surely, as these great fauours of God are liuelie testimonies of his power and goodness: so are they worthy to be had in remembrance, yea very profitable is the remembrance thereof to vs, both to stirre vp our thankfulness, and encrease our faith, that so they may be sanctified, continued and encreased vpon vs; yea be vndoubted pledges of eternall happinesse.

I.

And therefore seeing the Lord hereby prouides, that his blessings may not be forgotten, and so passe without their true vse; *this may* serue for the great condemnation of the world: who on the contrarie, vseth all occasions to put out the remembrance of Gods mercies from the earth: *either ascribing* Gods mercies to their *wis* or *desart*, or putting them off to *second causes* as if
not

not the LORD but some ordinarie meanes had compassed the same: or which is worst of all imputing them to blind chance &c.. *And are not* they also as faultie herein, that diminish and obscure the great workes of GOD, either not *regarding* them at all, or *speaking basely* of them? *What* shall we thinke of these, that gnash their teeth hereat, that repine that the Lord should bee gracious vnto his people? *And are* there not some that thinke such great deliuerances are discredits vnto a people, as signifying what they had deserued: and what some of their owne bowells would haue executed on their Fathers and brethren.

May nor pollicie aduize that so great mercies of God should be suppressed, lest the reioycing thereof, vpbarding the wicked should prouoke them to renew their malice and multiplie their mischiefes? *Surely* if there were no other euidence to condemne vs of vnthankfulnessse; yet the generall security of a people and encrease of sinne, is a fearefull witnesse of their forgetfulnessse of a blessing: and so may bee a meanes to turne it vnto a curse.

Well let vs looke our faces wisely in this glasse: and as the Lord hath offered vs time to remember so great mercies: so let vs daylie meditate on the wonders of our GOD. *Let vs* keepe a regeester of Gods blessings that we may keepe our selues in the possessions of them. *And* let vs withall keepe an account of our sinnes: that so we may see, what need we haue of Gods mercie, and so the rather meditate thereon.

And for our comfort let vs further learne this; that as God neuer bestowes great blessings but they shall be truelie sanctified vnto some: so if that by this holie remembrance, we shall keepe our right in them, we shall not onely be deliuered in the euill day, when the LORD shall take vengeance on the vnthankfulnessse of the world: but we shall see some greater things then these; the LORD will deale wonderfully betweene

betweene *Israel* and *Egipt*: when the obstinate shalbe confounded: then shall the righteous flowrish: yea the Lord will prouide meanes for the constancy of their hap-pineffe: for so it followeth.

Vox. 17.

And the King loued Hester above all the women, and shee found grace and fauour in his sight more then all the Virgins: so that hee set the crowne of the Kingdome vpon her head: and made her Queene insteede of Vashty.

In which words the spirit of God, setteth downe what befell *Hester* after her taking into the Kings house. Namely that she is aduanced further to bee *Queene* in steed of *Vashty*, which is notably described. First by the occasion hereto; Namely that *the King loued her above all the women*. And secondly by the signe of this preferment, *hee set the crowne of the Kingdome vpon her head*.

Obf. III.
God makes
his children
gratious
when it may
serue for his
glory and
their good.

1

2

Concerning the extraordinarie fauour and affection, that the King is here sayd to beare vnto this gracious maiden. As it was the admirable worke of God for her more speedie and sure aduancement, necessarily to be taken at this time, when the yron was in the fire: *Carnall* loue being so inconstant, especially when it is in some sort satisfied: *And the poore maiden* (no doubt) much humbled with yeelding to the present necessity; and therefore had neede of some meanes to cast light out of darkenesse, that their might be hope of sanctifying of this sinne into her: So doth it herein most notably commend the *power*, *mercie* and *Wisdom*e of GOD vnto vs.

His power in this: that he both can turne the affections of the wicked vpon his Children, and settle them constantlie therevpon, when as the cause in them rather threatenes change.

His wisdom also appeares in this: that this extraordinary fauour of the Prince, being now necessary, for the aduance-

aduancement of *Hester*, and so for the good of the Church, though afterward it bated (to shew the inconstancie of flesh, and also a further power of God in the reuiuing of the same) yet now it increaseth contrarie to the carnall occasion, which being satisfied, vsually breeds loathing: especiall in those, whose honour and delight is in change, so that about all the rest onely *Hester* is gracious: the fauour of this great Monarche is constant to her.

And the mercie of God doth also shine herein most comfortably, both to the good of the Church, and particular contentment of his seruant.

The Church hereby is now provided for a deliuerer: before she be plunged into the extremitie of her daunger: and the *poore maiden* is by this aduancement recompenced for hir losse; and comforted also in some measure with the sanctifying of the same in a lawfull calling?

And surely that the Lord provided a Sauour before man had sinned: that *Moses* is borne before *Israels* oppression is encreased; that *Ioseph* is aduanced before the famine is in *Canaan*: that *Hester* is aduanced before *Haman* conspiring breakes forth, *doth not* this exceedingly commend the watchfulnesse of GOD ouer his Church? *Doth not* this manifest the freenesse of his loue, that goes before the particular object? *Doth not* this serue much to the confirmation of our faith, that before we call he will heare vs, before we haue neede hee will provide for vs? So did the LORD provide an *Elizabeth* before the great and sharpe storme fell vpon his Church.

Vse 1. And shall we then feare that the Lord will forsake vs in our troubles when he provides meanes of deliuerance before troubles come? Is he a God a faire off, and shall we not beleue him to be a GOD nre at hand? *Oh let vs learne to liue by faith; so shall we see a faire off! Let vs stay vs in our present troubles, that* 2 Pet. 1. 8.
God

Obser. 112.
God provides
a deliuerer for
his Church
before it be
cast into the
extremity of
danger.
Esay 63.
Math. 6.

Phil, 1. 39.

4

God loued vs before we were: *but euen* when we were his enemies, he sought vs, and preuented vs, and shall he not now much more rescue vs beeing his friends? Oh wee of little faith!

Obf. 113.

The mercies
of God to his
children past
finding out.

But are the mercies of God here at an end? No surely, the mercies of the Lord are euerlasting, and his truth past finding out: *Wade* wee yet further into them in this particular case of *Hester*, and let vs willingly loose our selues in the meditation thereof. Was it not a *great mercy of the Lord*, to aduance her to the *Kings* house: And was it not a *greater mercy* that in the *Kings* house shee is humbled, that so by renewing her repentance shee might bee better fitted to her further estate. *And was not the mercy of God very admirable herein*, that being abased by the King, she yet finds extraordinary fauour in his sight, that so shee might finde comfort in her former sorrow? But *was* it not yet a further mercy, that beeing a subiect, yea a stranger. and of the abominable and intralld Nation; yet shee is called to *bee the lawfull wife* of so mighty a Monarch, and not onely so, *but euen to bee aduanced* to the hyghest dignitie of all.

1
Iohn, 1. 3.2
1 Th, 1. 4.3
Rom, 8. 29.

So constant is the LORD, that whome hee loueth, hee loueth to the end: *Such a priuledge hath godlynesse* that to the pure all thinges are pure: *So sure is our saluation* that euen all thinges shall turne to our good.

Vse. 1. And shall wee then sinke vnder the burthen of our sinnes, seeing wee cannot sound the depth of the mercies of God? Shall wee plead vnwisely against GOD, seeing hee cannot choose but loue vs, seeing his loue is manifested in our sinnes, and his power in our weaknesse? Shall wee repine at his chastisements, seeing of very faithfulness hee doth correct vs? Shall wee distrust his blessings, seeing hee bestowes them in mercy? Surely, if we see not mercy euery where wee want the eye of faith, *And if wee laye not hold*

hold of eternal mercies, we fight not \bar{s} good fight off faith.

But lette vs examine a little further this case of *Hester*? May wee truly say that here's nothing but mercy? Was it the mercy of God, that shee should bee so highly aduanced? VVhy then doth the spirit teach Gods children to pray, that the Lord would not giue them neither *pouerty* nor *riches*: least *being full* they should *deny him*: being empty they should *blaspheme* God.

Ans. Surely the prayer of the seruant of God, as it was conditionall, not simply renouncing either fulnesse, or want, but as it might stand with the will of God and good of the receiuer: so thereby doth it graunt a power vnto God, to giue either fulnes or impose wāt at his pleasure. And seeing where God giues in loue, he also sanctifies the gift, may not then the Lord giue fulnesse, and yet preferue in humility, and obedience? May he not lay *pouerty* on his child, and yet keepe him from impatience? Yet at least so farre as that he shall not take the name of God in vaine: Indeed if nature be left to it selfe, and that as this most likely and vsuall be considered in this case: *fulnesse* may breed *forgetfulnesse*, and *pouerty* prophaneesse and distrust of Gods prouidence. And therefore in regard of our weaknesse and aptnesse to offend in the excesse: *Yea* considering our folly, that wee knowe not whats fittest for vs; and the *wisdom*e of God, which wee must not sette to schoole: The spirit teacheth vs rather to pray for the meane, that God would feede vs with food conuenient for vs, neither yet simply to tye God to this measure, as if no other were fit for vs, but to acknowledge hercin our infirmity to God, who as without GOD wee are not able to compasse any, so least able to sway that state, & is most subiect to temptation: & yet this doth not preiudice, but God may giue euen fulnes: seeing hee doth make euen \bar{s} greatest honors conuenient for his children, and therein doth shew his great mercy in their preservation: by how much the more their estate is subiect to temptation.

1 Tim. 4.

Obs. 114.

Whith: r

great prosper-
ity be a bless-
ing in mercy
to Gods chil-
dren.

Obiect.

Prouer. 30.

Ques.
Vvwhether a
man may
praie for a-
boundance?

Yes if it shall now be demanded, seeing the Lord giues fulnesse, whether I may not lawfully seeke it by prayer of him?

Ans. Surely where God in particular hath promised, and leades me along with apparant likelyhoods thereof, there I may safely draw on the Lord, to the accomplishment of his worke; because by faith we obtaine the promises: and prayer is the meanes to expresse and increase our faith. And this was the case of *Dauid* when he prayed for the accomplishment of Gods promise concerning the Kingdome. But where there is no such manifestation of Gods purpose in perticular, there I may safely desire in generall what God will cast vpon me for my fitting vnto him: but for this or that condition, I must leaue it to God, least I preiudice his wisdom, and discover my distrust, least I presume to come to god, whereas he giues vs is of free mercy. Only I deny not but some extraordinary instinct may warrant some perticular extraordinary practise in this case: which being singular, is not to be imitated of vs.

Ques.
Whether it
be lawfull to
receiue great
blessings offered?

*If it shall be further demanded whether it be lawfull to receiue such excellent blessings as are cast vpon vs, seeing *Elisha* refused *Nahamans* gifts, &c. *Daniel* at the first refused the Kings reward;*

Ans. Surely I see not, but God being the only giuer, and wee
1 *hauing the best right; much good likely to be redeemed here-*
2 *by, and good meanes vsed in the compassing thereof; these*
3 *things considered, I see not but we may lawfully receiue*
4 *them, as the speciall pledges of Gods fauor: if there be no*
leprofie or such like mischief attending vpon them.

Ques.
Whether the
Minister may
receiue wages
for his
paine?

*As for *Elisha* and *Daniel*, their refusal was iust, because the giftes of these giuers were respectiue and conditional, if they would doe such a thing for them, or in regard of such a thing done: and therefore the seruants of God, to shew they were not mercenary, did iustly refuse these reprochfull giftes: (Say you) may we not then receiue a recompence in lieu of our paines? Is not the labourer worthy of his hire? May hee not iustly exact it? May he not lawfully*

lawfully receiue it ?

Yea surely, the Lord hath appointed , that they which ^{1 Cor. 9.}
serue at the Altar should liue of the Altar: *It is a sinne not
to giue: It is a greater sinne* to spoile and deny : and ther-
fore it is most lawfull to receiue what is due vnto vs. And
yet sometime we may refuse , though not simply as *Elisba*
did: Sometime we may not exalt, though we haue power, ^{1 Cor. 11.}
as the blessed Apostle Paul did . Yea may refuse first, & yet re-

ceiue afterward , as *Daniel did : refuse* wee may when the
wicked thinke our paines no better worth then their
gifts , or hope that only by these gifts they may compasse
the benefit of our paines : *So did Daniell first refuse* the
gifts of the King : *So did Peter refuse* the gifts of *Simon*
Magus; And yet to shew our *right* , wee may also receiue
them for our vse; when these stumbling-blockes are remo-
ued: *So did Daniel* afterward receiue those honours which
before he refused. And was there not some such stübling-
block in the aduancement of *Hester*? Might she safely mar-
ry with him that was diuorced from his wife? (and accor-
ding to the custome of these countries) was not without
his choyce of wiues. *Surely* the Lord Iesus him-
selfe the most perfect examiner of the Law, he hath deter-
mined , y who soeuer puts away his wife, vnlesse it be for fornicati-
on , commits adultery : And therefore it followeth that
whosoeuer marrieth with the party , that takes this libe-
ty to be diuorced, not vpon that vrgent occasion; doth no
lesse commit adultery. And did not the Lord therefore
(though hee had abundance of spirit) yet appoint this
knot in marriage to bee onely of two , and no more: be-
cause he sought an holy seed ? How then may *Hester* bee
cleared from the case of adultery ? How can she bee freed
from an vnholý marriage ?

Ques.

*Hesters mar-
riage whether
lawful or not*

Ans. May not the Law-giuer *dispence* with his Law?
And may not that in *Hester* be good by a dispensation,
which in others without such extraordinary priuledge,
is simply euill ? And what though the Lord shoulde
admitte sinne in the accomplishment of the worke:
may

may hee not pardon the sinner, and get him-selfe the glory. Surely though wee dare not simply iustifie *Hester* in this case; yet if we shall measure things by the manner & successe, did not the Lord admirably bring this thing to passe? Did it not tend to the great good of the Church.

Nay who I pray you were loosers hereby? *The Lord* hee winnes him-selfe great glory, in aduancing so highly his hand-maid from so base an estate. *Hester* looses not heereby, shee obtaines the greatest honour and content that the earth can afford; and yet shee forsakes not her righteousnesse, but rather increaseth it.

The King hee gaines hereby some truer contentment of his mind and restraint of his lusts, *yea his reproche* in repudiating *Vashty* is hereby well cured: *The Prouinces and whole Kingdome*, they obtaine rest from their grieuous oppressions: *And the poore Church of God*, that is the greatest gayner, as being deliuered from a most desperate extremity, and aduanced also to great peace and prosperity, euen in a strange land.

Ques.
Whether
lawfull to
marry with an
Infidel.

But yet ther is an other flaw in this marriage: *she marries with an Infidell and cursed Idolater*: how may this bee dispensed withall?

Surely by the same Lord who brings light out of darkness, and turnes the euills of his children to his glory, and their good. And yet wee may not simply condemne this maiden herein: she was a subiect, and therefore could not do what she would in this case. And yet the Lord here did what he would: *yea what Hester* simply was not to refuse. For though the Lord had commanded that his people should not marry with Idolaters, yet doth he also not simply deny them vpon conditions to marry with such captiues as they had taken in war. *And the Saints* of God haue warrantably matched with strangers, & the Idolatrous brood &c. As *Boaz* with *Ruth*, *Sampson* with the *Philistian* &c. When the occasions haue beene extraordinary and the dispensation beaunty.

Ios. 23.
Iudg. 3.
Deut. 21.

And therefore no warrant for vs that haue choyce of holy seede to sowe amongst the thornes: thereby to wound our owne soules, and choake our seed, or else by the egge of the Serpent, to breed the Cockatrice, to haue mungrell issue, that shall speake halfe *Assur* and halfe *Canaan*: shall not this vnequall yoake cast out the yoake of Christ? shall not the stranger deuoure our strength? shall not the curse of God cast out such roote and branches from the face of the earth?

Well, thus wee see the mercy of God truly iustified in *Hesters* aduancement: let vs now see how *Abasuerosh* the King iustificieth and adorneth the same: It followeth.

Hee sets the Crowne of the kingdom vpon her head, and made her Queene, &c.

Loe here the ensigne of this great honour which is due vnto this poore captiue, the Crowne of the Kingdome is set vpon her head. So doth this new Bride-grome strue to doe all honour vnto his bride: *So doth God confirme his child in this extraordinarie dignitie: by this meanes is Hesters* aduancement made knowne to the Church of God, and by this full performance of complement, is more honored and approoued. But this is not all: *It followeth.*

Then the King made a great Feast to all his Princes and Vicer, Nobles, &c.

In which words the holy Ghost sets downe vnto vs the solemnization of this royall mariage, and that by five circumstances.

1. The King makes a great feast thereat to all his Princes and seruants.

2. This Feast is dedicated to the memoriall of *Hester*, which was *Hesters* feast.

3. Rest is giuen to the Prouinces, they are made partakers of this common ioy, that the mariage of *Hester* might be more acceptable to them.

4. The King giues gifts vnto the poore, and sends presents abroad farre and neere.

5. Hee shewes the power of the King in this his

Obfer. 115.
Feasting law
full at mari-
ages.

magnificence, to signifie his true contentmēt & ioy in this marriage. And first, to adde greater state & solemnity to y^e mariage of his new spouse, the King yet further makes a solempne feast to all his Princes and Nobles; of the lawfulness and right vse whereof we haue spoken plentifully heretofore. Only thus much we may further adde concerning the occasion of this feast: that the custome of solempnizing mariages with feasts hath beene ancient and commendable, as being a time of great ioy, and therefore fitt to be shewed in the meanes of ioy; especially in regarde of such company, as at such times come together: who may lawfully take occasion of a more liberall refreshing. And therefore not vnlawfull to bee vsed, and hereby euen of Christians, who as they know their libertie: so also they can best tell how to vse it, in a wise diuiding of the time, and moderation of Gods blessings.

Obferu.
Dedication
of feasts to
the memory
of peticular
persons.

That which followeth concerning the dedication of the feast to the memory of *Hester*; as it doth discover the greater affection of the King towards his spouse: so it *magnifieth* yet further the mercy of God toward his seruant: who by this memoriall is commended to posteritie, and euen highly honored of the enemies of God: which though it be no warrant for that popish custome of dedicating feasts to the honor of Saints, vnlesse the fact of a wicked Prince shall iustifie the same: so notwithstanding in the equity thereof doth approve such holy remembrances of the Saints of GOD, which may both put them in minde of Gods mercies towards them; and promouke posterity to an holy imitation thereof: as *tombes, trophies, &c.* Thus doth *Ahab* neuer so celebrate the memory of *Hester* by a solempne feast, and so shall the children of God bee honored of their enemies, so shall their names and memorials be continued to posteritie.

And yet the affection of this Monarch stayes not heret: but yet farther to grace this wedding of *Hester*, behold, he *gives rest to the Princes*, which were euen tyred with taxes and exactions: so do the wicked fare the better euen
for

for Gods children sake: *so doth the Lord make away* for his children, even to be iustified of the wicked.

And surely whither he caused these nuptials generally to be solemnized throughout his kingdome, by setting a part the day thereto, that the subiect might bee partaker in the Princes ioy, and celebrate his mariage with feasting and libertie; or rather spared his subiects for the time, of some tribute that was due. This as it makes to the great honor and celebration of *Hessers* mariage, because God being glorified, there is peace with men; so it also serues to the great approbation of godlinesse, the whole land is at rest, when Gods Church is respected, when Gods children are aduanced, when the righteous are in authority, then the people reioyce; then is great glory, great peace and contentment. *So doth the Lord sanctifie great blessings vnto his children*, that they may be *good foundations* against y day of Christ: *so doth he secure* hereby their ticklish estates, by knitting the hearts of the people vnto them, through the benefit therof. So doth he make y world without excuse, when they shall hate that which is the onely cause of their greatest honor, security & contentment.

Vse. And doth not this condemne the folly of men that complaine of *righteousnesse*, as if it were the greatest trouble-house & trouble-state that may be; that thrust out Gods children, as the only disturbers of their rest & happiness; are not they more then blind, which see no profit in godlinesse, but still are poring like the *Sodomites*, when the doore is before them: saying, *who will shew vs any good?* do not they open their mouthes against heauen, that say it is in vaine to serue the Lord? Are not they the greatest enemies to themselves, that keepe downe Gods children, and hinder their advancement; that about all things feare least the Lord should bee glorious in his Saints; least *his house* set his King vpon his holy hill of *Sion*? Surely if the *house* of G O D, bring a sword vpon the earth, it is not because hee is not the Prince of peace, because hee offers not also peace vnto them: but because the world refused peace, therefore doe they plucke downe a sword vpon them,

Obf. 116.
When the
righteous are
aduanced the
people reioice
1 Rou. 29.2

1 Rou. 28.12

2
1 Tim. 6

3

4

Nehem. 3.

Iob. 21. 13

Psal. 4.

Malach. 3

Psal. 3.

Math. 10. 34

Luk. 12.

Eisy. 9

Math. 20

- and the corner stone becomes a rock of offence: And if any be afraid, wherein they should take most comfort; they are the sinners in *Sion*, that are thus afraid; feare takes hold vpon the hypocrites: these indeed shall not dwell with the deuouring fire: *these cannot endure the everlasting burning.* What flesh shall endure when hee appears; who is like a purging fire, and like Fullers Soape? Yet shall the siluer abide the touche; and be purified thereby, yea the sonnes of *Leui*: shall be fined and prepared, that they may bring offerings vnto the Lord in righteousness. Then shall the offerings also of *Iudah* and *Ierusalem* be acceptable vnto the Lord, as in old time, and in the yeares before, yea the Lord will take away the iniquitie of the land in one day. Then shall many be turned away from iniquitie, and yet shall call every man his neighbour under the Vine, and under the Fig-tree. *Zach. 1. 9. 10.* Then shall *Ierusalem* be inhabited without walls, for the Lord will be vnto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glorie in the midst of her. Then will the Lord turne to the people a pure language, that they may all call vpon the name of the Lord, and serue him with our shoulder: Oh that the Lord would arise, & haue mercy on *Syon*, that he would take out of the midst of her them: that haue reioyce of her pride, and are puffed vp, in regarde of the holy mountaine: that the lying and equiuocating generation were rooted out, that the vile were seperated from the precious: Then should there be an humble and poore people, and they would trust in the name of the Lord: then should there be holy vessels vnto the Lord, yea every pot in *Ierusalem* should be holy, then should not *Ashur* saue them, neither would they ride vpon horses: but in their God, the fatherlesse should finde comfort. The righteous Lord shall be exalted in the saluation of his chosen.
- Malach. 3. 2.
3-4
- Malach. 1.
- Zach. 1. 4. 5
1. One confident and without grudging.
- Zeph. 3. 13
- Ofc. 14

Vse. Who so is wise and hee shall vnderstand these things, and prudent and hee shall know them: for the wayes of the Lord are righteous; and the iust shall walke in them, but the wicked shall fall therein. But of this point more fully (by Gods grace) hereafter. It followeth

And thus

Gods grace) hereafter. *It followeth.*

And gave rest vnto the Princes, and gave gifts according to the power of a King.

In that this Persian Monarch here releases his subjects of the burthen of subsidies and taxations, when hee and his court do enlarge themselves in their pleasures: herein we may seeke shadow of that substance, which is required in Christian Princes: namely, that though their state and fulnesse afford them pleasure and ease, by the toyle, and labour of others, yet in the vse thereof, they should so indifferently behaue themselves, as to let this oyle of gladnesse runne downe to the skirts of the garment; that those may taste at least of the cup of their pleasure: who haue especially trod the Wine-presse, and prepared the cup vnto them: and by partaking therein, may both better beare the burthen, and so still maintaine the plough in going.

Little therefore do such Princes know what wrong they do themselves, when they will not speake comfortably to their people, much lesse allow them some immunity when they take their pleasures: as hereby esteeming their delight to be peerelesse and acceptable, because they are singular and aboue the reach of others, yea accounting their pleasures herein the better seasoned, when they are procured and enioyed with the paine & toyle of their people: And lesse doe such know what belongs to God, or the safety of their kingdomes, that giue the biidle to their subjects, to prophane Gods Sabaothes and contemne his word; that so they might lesse enioy them in their godlesse pleasures, or else the better endure such drudgery as they are put vnto, when wicked Princes runne ryot. And surely in that herein they thinke to gratifie their sinne, & granting pardon for any offence: this as it doth most dishonour God so it shall surely tend, to the reproach of such indulgence, as being the speciall meanes of the disobeying of gouernment when God is dishonoured for the contentment thereof. Ob that gouerners were wise to consider these things:

Obs. 117.
Princes to the enioying of their pleasure, are to be careful, full not to oppresse their subjects, but to giue some relaxation therewithall vnto them.
Psal. 133.

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that they would consider how pleasures communicated are both lesse enuied and lesse set by: and so both preuent danger in their vse and abuse also by wise intermitting the same. *And yet y they would be wise in yeelding this liberty, not to cloake their owne abuse, neither with the dishonour of God, not to the iustifying of sinne, nor hardning of sinners, not as if hereby they would make demonstration of their happineffe: or basely prostitute themselves to the lust of their people: but herein wisely acknowledging their common condution by nature, and so to become equall with those of the lower sort: recompencing hereby the labour of their subiects: and keeping herein that royal law, euen to do to others as they would be done unto themselves: considering wisely that seeing they are to weepe with them that weepe: so they must not reioyce to make their subiects heauy. And surely if we consider this perticular wherein this heathen Prince gratifies his subiects, namely to release his subiects for a time of their continual taxes: as this was especially intended to honour his Nuptia's, y the loynes of his people might blesse their Prince, and his marriage: so we shall find it no small part of the Princes honour, as not vnneccessarily to exact vpon his people, for the satisfying of his pleasure: so euen to remitte somewhat of lawful exactions, to giue some breathing & intermission therto. For is hee not herein a law unto himselfe, when in that which is lawful, he bounds him-selfe, & doth not what he may, but what is most expedient? And so ruling him-selfe, shall better rule his people: Is he not wisely to keepe some stocke in store, and not still to bee laying forth least hee haue not in the season to compasse the market: Doth hee not heereby keepe his subiects in heart; that they may still supply cheerefully whereas the King must loofe his right, when there is no more to bee had: And then the King must supply when the subiect hath it not: VVhereas otherwise the King receiuing moderately, the subiect may haue where-withal; and so both supplied, and contented thereby.*

Rom. 12.

Obs. 118.

Prince. honour consists in the easing of their subiects of their continual burdens.

Surely

Surely happy are those Princes that know their strength; Yet more happy if they knew how to vse it: which is not to inioy their pleasures with their subiects payne, not to empty their people, to fill them-selues; but as to esteeme it their glory to haue multitude of people: so wisely to maintaine this multitude; and will they bee maintained with nothing? If they be still emptied how can they prosper? And how can they then bee the glory of the Kingdom? Wel Behold our Persian Monarch here doth not onely giue rest vnto the Prouinces, but also-

Giue gifts according to the power of the King. Thus even the wicked, when they are imployed in Gods seruice, for the good of his Church, shall not only bee bridled from much euill which they would do, but moued also to doe much good in shew, though otherwise they would not do: Here's no mention of drunkennesse, no calling for Vainety: as were in the former feast. The marriage of Gods seruant shal not be dishonoured with such abuses. But what there's rest giuen to the Prouinces who were like to indure heauier burthens; & gifts distributed according to the power of the King, whose power is vsually scene in taking from his people. So doth God honour his children by restrayning the wicked: so doth hee harden the wicked in that they shall not want the shew of vertue in the seruice of those which yet notwithstanding onely for their vertue, they doe most deadly hate: so doth he get him glory by them both in confirming hereby the faith of his children, and ripening the wicked to their appointed damnation.

And if wee shall further consider the bounty of this Monarch, in giuing gifts so magnifically: Doth not the Lord hereby further honour this aduancement of his seruant?

May not Princes learne hence to bee bountifull to their subiects; and instead of pilling of them, to bestow sometimes largesse vpon them? May they not well doe it, seeing they giue them but their owne, and doe they not winne their hearts thereby

Obs. 119.
Wicked bride-
led and sur-
nished with
good gifts for
the good of
the Church.

Obs. 120.
Princes are to
be liberall to
their subiects.

3. and can they store it vp better then there where they may require it againe. *And do they not ease themselves of much care and feare.*

Surely as it was the custome at such extraordinary kinds of ioy and feasting, to enlarge the heart in such gifts, and so shall Princes finde a great commodity herein: *the people are contented, and the kingdome well fenced, vertue is encouraged, and miserie releined, and Princes herein do most come neere vnto God, and the people are more faithfully knit vnto their Gouvernors.*

Obs. 121.
Gods children ought to be liberall according to their ability and with all their power.

But marke I pray you the bountifullnesse of this King, it is said, that *he gave gifts according to the power of the King: Not niggardly and basely*, but bountifully and according to his abilitie. So ought the children of God much more to extend their liberality according to their callings, least this heathen Monarch rise vp in iudgement against them. *And therefore they are 1. to distribute in faith*, with warrant from the word, and looking for recompence at the hands of God, not being wearie of well dooing. 2. *They are to give in righteousness*, both of that which is their owne, and also where it may bee lawfull, not to maintaine sinne, but for loue of the person, yea where it is most necessary, to those that are in greatest want: and among them especially to the *household of faith*. 4. Wee must respect the end of all our well-doing principally the saluation of the soule and glory of God: whereby wee may both condemne all Popish charitie, which generally faileth in all these circumstances, and so trie our selues whether we be truly charitable or no.

Prov. 9.

Obs. 122.
Gods providence in vnequall matters and societies of vnlike.

Thus is the mariage of *Hester* solemnized with all the state and complement futable thereto: thus is a Captiue Virgin aduanced to bee a royall Queene. Thus is vertue ioyned to vice to bridle the same. Thus is vice a companion of vertue, thereby to humble and so to trie the same. Thus two are in a bed, the one forsaken, the other elected: both brought together by the Lord, and by him hereby fitted to their seuerall ends. *Behold here some resemblance.*

resemblance of the estate of Gods children in a visible Church, where shall they sit but they may meete with a *Indas* in their dish? if they will not conuerse with the vn-cleane, must they not goe out of the world? *doth not the Lord hereby humble the one, and harden the other?* *is not his prouidence most admirable, in accomplishing hereby his righteous will, in them both.* But of this more fitlye by Gods grace hereafter. *And thus farre concerning the aduancement of Hester:* wherein for conclusion we may note,
 1. *The faithfulness of God*, in making good his promise. That whereas the Prophet *Jeremie* perswaded *Iechoniah* the King not to stand out against *Nabuchadnezzar*; when he came to besiege the Citie, but to yeeld himselfe willingly to the decree of God, to goe into captiuitie: promising him there-withall, and the people (in the name of the Lord) that if they obeyed his counsell, it should both go well with them in the land of their captiuitie, and after seuentie yeares they should againe returne into their countrie. *The King* obeying this counsell, is honorably according to his estate respected during his life; and among the rest, this *Hester* being daughter to one of those that were in that captiuitie, is here aduanced to the most eminent dignitie, and so is a meanes for the most gracious preseruatiō of the Church of God. *So constant is the Lord in performing his promise:* Because he is God and cannot alter his loue, hee is *all sufficient*, and who can hinder his purpose: *hee is truth is false*, and therefore hath he said it; and it shall stand? *neither* will hee for his glory disappoint the expectation of his people which are his praise, his delight and glory.

Vse. 1. Let therefore the faithfulness of God condemne our distrust: *let the wicked bee confounded*, that make a mock thereat. *In the experience* of what is past, let vs bee confirmed in what is behinde, & let this teach vs to keepe faithfully lawfull promises to each other: *and as the Lord is faithfull in his promises*, so is hee also as faithfull in his *threatnings*, and therefore let vs feare him for the one, and loue

1. Cor. 5

Obs. 123.

The Lord
faithfull in
making
good his
word.

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loue him for the other: and giue him both the glory of his mercy and his iustice.

Thus doth the righteous Lord make good his promise: but doth he not magnifie also his power in the means thereto? Behold through many crossings and contrary blasts, is this shippe brought to the haue: and through many desperate plunges is this poore captiue at length aduanced to greatest dignity. So doth the Lord worke by contrary means, that his power may be more manifest in making such vnlikely meanes serue him. Whereas otherwise if the means were likely, he might be thought to serue them. That carnall confidence being confounded; faith may be encreased: And the Lord may haue the onely glory of all his mercies, So Atheisme is wisely conuinced, that imputes things to chance; seeing such contrary meanes, implies extraordinary power and wisdom in the effecting of things.

Vse 1. Let vs not therefore *presume*, when the meanes are fairest, *neither let vs despaire*, when they are most crosse and vnlikely, And though God vse contrary meanes, because he is able to turne them to his pleasure; *Yet let vs vse the most likely*, where it is left to our choice, and not *despise the vnlikeliest*, when God imposeth the same. Because, as here the *vnlikeliest*, will best trie our faith, so there the *likeliest* do shew our obedience. 1. As being *commanded of God*, 2. and most *agreeable to reason fittest for our vse*, and most *iustificable in the issue* whether we preuaile or no. Lastly that *Hester*, by these manifold and strange afflictions, is necessarily brought to so great preferment, we may here obserue the great benefit of troubles: That they are means to worke out our greatest happinesse. *So as that wil line Godly must suffer affliction* and by many tribulations we shall enter into the Kingdome of heauen. Because afflictions do both *purge out our drosse*, and make vs fit for *mercy*, and they are good means so to *humble vs*, & we may *vse happines aright*. They keepe vs from *going a stray*, that so we may come to the wished haue, and *they preserue vs from such quicksands*, as would sinke vs in our iourney.

They

2 Cor 4. 6

Lumen e Tenebris.

Obfer. 124.

The Lord accomplisheth his will by contrary meanes.

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Obf. 125.

The greatest afflictions profitable to Gods children to the obtaining of the greatest blessings.

2 Tim 3. 12

Act 14

Esay 1. 25

Psal. 66 11

Psal. 11 9

They trie vs wisely whether we will keepe the way or no, & proue very comfortable associates, to preuent Idlenesse, and wearisomnes. What should I say? though the world account them euill, and to the wicked the proue no lesse? yet to Gods Children, no blessing is well seasoned without them: No blessing well obtained, but by their ministry.

Use 1. And therefore though the world bee offended at the Crosse of Christ, and esteeme them cursed of God, that embrace the same; Yet let vs take vp the crosse, that so we may obtaine the crowne. Let vs suffer with Christ, that so we may reigne with him. Let vs looke for troubles, when we are about any good: let vs distrust our goodnesse, if it be not seasoned with trouble: and let this be our comfort, that our troubles are but short, but our recompence is incomparable and shall neuer decay.

Thus Hester is aduanced through great tribulation; and at length findes rest in a most honorable estate.

As for her companions it is not so with them: Nay the King him selfe he findes no rest. And hath not Hester also some affliction to season her great prosperity? yea surely. The Kings affection growes coult and his lust encreaseth. And therefore it followeth that The Virgins were gathered the second time. To wit; for a new supplie of the Kings vn-
 satisfiable lust. So vnreasonable is lust, so inconstant carnall affection: so lawlesse are the wicked: so short is any happinesse of perfection in this life. Thus Tyrants cease not to molest, and spoile their subjects, that they at length may be iustly spoiled.

Use 1. And shall not the righteous feare euen greatest happinesse? shall they rest vpon it? shall they not haue their loynes girt to follow hard after the marke? Shall the wicked torments haue an end, whose lusts are thus endless? shall we not hate this flesh that is so treacherous & deceitfull? shall we not be more watchfull ouer our selues; and others, by how much our greatest happines is subiect to such foyles? such is Mordecai. So it is here recorded of him.

Then

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oh. 7.
2 Tim 2.
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Vers. 19.

Obs. 126.
The lust of
the wicked
is insatiable.

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Then Mordecai saze in the Kings gate.

That is, he attended on his office in these times of *Hesters* aduancement, hee doth not presently conceiue higher matters, and so neglect his ordinary calling (as some ambitious *upstart* would haue done :) busying himselfe to creepe to preferment; hauing so direct a meanes to raise him speedily: but soberly he attends on his office; as, contented therewith: and for *state matters*, he leaues them to higher powers: as for *preferment*, though the Lord had a purpose shortly to aduance him thereto, and therefore it might be thought, some spirits might bee put into him to this end, yet wisely doth this holy man put off the thought thereof, by accustoming himselfe to his *meane condition*, and yet not without regarde of his *advanced Nephew*; whose aduancement growing now *iealous*, in regarde of this *new gathering of Virgins*, he is therefore sayd further to sit in the Kings gate, to haue intelligence thereof, and so to aduize and determine according. And surely in this example of *Mordecai* wee haue many notable points worthy our consideration.

Obs. 127.

Markes of
Gods childre
to be conten-
ted with our
callings, and
walke faith-
fully therein.

1 Cor. 7.

1.2.3.4

Psal. 128.

Math. 25.

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One is that he is contented with his calling, and employes himselfe faithfully therein; a notable marke of the child of God, who as he is commanded to abide in the calling wherevnto the Lord hath called him: as being *fittest* for him, and a tryall of his faith, to exercise his *humilitie*: so is he to walke faithfully therein, as whereby he doth *sanctifie* *the same vnto him*, shall see the blessing of God thereon, and also make way thereby to a greater blessing.

Vse. 1. Which as it condemnes those that will liue in *no calling*: so it also reproveth such as make choise of such callings as can yeeld no contentment, neither with any credit or comfort can we employ our selues therein: and are not they also condemned hereby: y hauing holy & lawfull callings, do either *basely abuse* *the* to *the* lusts of others, or else neglect *the* vnto the satisfying of their own lust? or els wickedly *giving* *the* over, or *changing* *the* for others, surely though it be not simply vnlawfull to change our callings,

if

if they will not *maintaine vs*, or wee bee *lawfully called* so *calling* how
either more necessary, for the Church or common wealth, to be left and
 as being fitter. So we must looke at *that necessary* and *unavoidable* changed.
ments, bee the measures of our maintenance, and that the
meanes and *manners* of our further calling, be direct and *sett*.
 futable.

As for our holy abiding in the calling vnto which God *waite* consci-
 hath called vs, *Certainely* if wee doe but remember the *phably* in our
account wee must make; and consider the *uncertainitie* callings.
 when wee shall be called thereto, if we looke for our *re-*
ward from God, and make a good conscience our rule to
 direct vs therein; if *singleness* of heart shall season our
 paines; and *casting* our care on God, be the casting of our
 profit; if *our buying* to profit, bee not vnprouitable to the
 soule; if *our straining* for profit, be not from a desire of rit-
 ches; if *prayer* be the foreman of our shop, and *thank-*
giuing vnto God, giue vp the account at night; if *Christian*
liberty, keepe the cash, and *contentednesse* bee the Counter.
 Lastly, if our *laying out*, bee without *prodigality*, and our
receipts without couetousnesse; These rules well obser-
 ued, and practised of vs; shall warrant vs safe walking in
 these slippery places, and be meanes to lay vp a *good foun-* 1.Tim.6
dation for vs, against the comming of Christ Iesus.

A second thing to be considered in *Mardikay*, is, that
 hee is not hasty of preferment, nor ambitious hee seekes
 the same: *Hee sits in the Kings gate*, hee is not fawning on
 Hester, nor proaling for greatness. A very true and liuely
 marke of the child of God: such was Hester (as we haue
 noted before): so was David, Joseph, and the rest: *these*
looke higher then the earth, and therefore count these things
 as dung: *these know the danger of climbing high*, and there-
 fore they will not bee too hasty to catch a fall. In a word;
 as the children of God know best how to vse this abun-
 dance, so of all other they haue least need thereof; and
 therefore will they not bee too hasty to take this bur-
 then vpon them, *when burthen is cast vpon them*; they may
 be better able to beare it, *disposed not to stay on things*

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Obs. 129.
 Acquiescentia
 damnable.

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Which being so, let hasty climbers see what right
 they have in heaven; let them wisely consider how they cast
 off all care of virtue, when once they begin to ride poste
 to preferment. As for Gods children let it suffice them, that
 they can clime no higher; and seeing they are hastning to
 the citie which is about let them wisely decline such moun-
 tains as may require some dangerous worship at their
 hands, and rather desire to have their life hid with Christ
 in God, so may they more freely imploy themselves in the
 things which are above, which in the flesh is kept low; &
 the pride thereof abased. And if they will be safely ambi-
 tious indeed, let them strive to excede in grace, and goe for-
 most to heaven: here the more hast the better speed, and
 the sooner speed the lesser misery, the longer happiness.
 But why doth the holy Ghost here make such precise men-
 tion of *Mordecaies* sitting at the gate? no doubt though
 he attended his office, hee forgot not his daughter now
 being advanced; and as a tender father, hath an eare after
 her; he sits in the gate to hearken after her estate, and to
 aduize as he should be called. So carefull ought fathers
 to bee for the good of their children. So is our heavenly
 Father carefull and continually prouident over vs. But of
 this point heretofore, As also of the next verse, concerning
 the concealing of *Hesters* nation and kindred, according
 as *Mordecai* had formerly aduized; onely let vs adde
 for the iustifying of this practise of *Hester* thus much, that
 though she lawfully conceales her country and nation to
 prevent danger, yet is she no warrant to Popish dissem-
 bling, and damnable equiuocating: for shee conceales be-
 ing not demanded; they beeing demanded corrupt the
 truth, by reseruing truth in the minde, and vterring a lye
 with the mouth: Shee conceales for the safety of her selfe,
 and the Church of God, they keepe them-selues close to
 destroy the Church of God. She is commanded by her Vnckle,
 who hath lawfull power thereto: they take warrant
 from that man of sinne, who hath none to giue. Thus is
Hester no warrant for Popish equiuocating, much lesse
 will

will equiuocate; warrant & maintaine Popery. *The Lord will confound the liar and the deceitfull man.*

And seeing that Hester now being so honorably married; doth yet so respect the aduice of her Vnckle, this may teach vs, *That as honour doth not quench loue in the Saints of God: so marriage also doth not take away obedience to Parents.* *Obf. 130.* Honor doth not quench loue in Gods children.

And surely how should honour quench loue in them, who the more pledges they haue of Gods loue, the more are they prouoked to loue one another. by how much they haue now better meanes to shew their loue: can the fire goe out when more wood is cast on? and can there be a greater honor to honor, then to be kinde and affable to inferiours? and how shall honour bee maintained without true loue? and if wee loue not may wee hope to bee beloved?

Use. 1. What comfort then can such haue of their greatness and honors, that place the glory thereof in despising inferiours, and giuing them all occasions of hatred against them? what hope of continuance where loue is not settled? Let Politicians looke to this, and see well to their standing. Surely feare is but a sorry keeper of honor, and ialousie will hardly procure continuance thereto: let them hate me, so they feare mee, is the voyce of tyranny: and if they hate, they will plotte destruction: this is the iustice of God. But of this point heretofore. Now.

Concerning the obedience that this gracious Queene performes to her father, being married away from him: this also teacheth vs: *that children are bound to obey their parents, and performe dutie unto them, though they be married from them, and so bee vnder an other government.* *Obf. 131.* Marriage takes not away obedience from parents. And the reason is, because one of these governments is subordinate to the other. & may both agree without impeachment to each other: yea obedience to either in their places, is that wherby they both are happily maintained: & finally if respect of parents be most necessary to marriage, ought there not to be a respect still to parents; euen when this blessing

is enioyed. Thus did the *Patriarches* obey their Fathers, and the *commandements* of obedience to parents being morall, and perpetuall, doth it not bind vs all our life long?

Obf. 132.

Marriage a
neerer bond
then that of
nature.

Math. 19.

Indeed, as the bond of mariage is neerer then that of nature; because it both renews the bond of nature, and aduanceth also nature to an honorable estate: *yea resembleth* the most neere coniunction betweene *Christ* and his Church; so ought we rather to keepe this bond, then the bond of nature: if such occasion should bee offered which should be preferred: not that herein we breake the bond of nature, but wisely establish it; in subordinating the same to a mote high and neerer bond. So is our Sauiour to be vnderstood, when he saith: *For this cause shall a man leaue Father and Mother and cleaue to his wife*: meaning thereby, that mariage is a neerer bond, then that of nature: therefore of the two, rather cleaue to thy wife, if occasion should be offered whether should he forsake? The resolution hereof lieth in the consideration of such duties, as doe belong to these severall callings. Whereof some are common to both, others are peculiar to either. Those which are common to both, are either simply common to both, or respectiue and comparatively. Those which are simply and generally common to both callings, are 1. *Reuerence*, 2. *Love*, and 3. *Naturall affection* &c. generally such as simply respect their persons, as they beare the image of God, and resemble his authority ouer vs. Those which are common to both with respect & prolation, are *Obedience*, *Maintenance*, &c. which though we owe to both, yet are we to performe them in their order. *Obedience* first to the husband: before the Father, maintenance to the wife before the parents, yet herein also being lead by the chiefeest bond. Namely to doe good especially to the household of faith: and wisely discerning the inuinciblenesse of necessity: not standing on what man may haue, neither what superfluous: we shrinke not: but so depending on the prouidence of God: as doe to neglect present relief, and therein to bee led by the neerer bond.

As for such duties as are proper to either: such as are

due

due beneuolence, cohabitation, in the state of marriage: these not concerning parents, may well be performed without impeachment to their honour. As likewise such duties as are not proper betweene the Father and the Sonne, may very well stand with the performance of such as concerne the State of marriage: so that they all tend to the *glorie of God*, and principally intend *the saluation of the soule*.

Vse 1. Which as it condemneth those Parents that hauing aduanced their Children to this honorable Estate of marriage, do either *basely crouch vnto*, or by too much *indulgence* loose the right in their Childrens subiection: *So doth it conuince* their extreame folly, which is the cause thereof; Namely, their parting with too great portions, or putting ouer their estates vnto them: By which, it comes to passe, that their Children being puffed vp, and hauing the sword put into their hands, in steed of obedience to Parentes, do many times beate them with their owne rodde. And so by Gods iudgement prouoking hereby their Parents in the bitterness of their soules, to cursing and complayning: *the Lord beares their crye*, and punisheth such rebellious plants, by rooting them out, and laying wast their habitations.

And therefore also such children may here learne their lesson. As not so much to stand vpon portion, or such outward complement for their preferment: so to performe *conscionable* obedience, while they are at home, so shall they not forget it when they are abroad.

And married folkes also, may here take out their lesson, *not to despise* their aged Parents but rather now to performe them *double honour*, because they were not onely the cause of their beeing, but in placing them thus comfortably, a good meanes of their well being.

Yea they that are left of their Parents, to take their chance (as we say) and to get it out of the fire; these haue most cause to honour their Parents, because as

they can more sufficiently requite them in that they were meanes of their being: So being now put to a more iust triall of the sincerity of their obedience, and being certainly perswaded; that as what was wanting in Parents hath beene supplied by the Lord: so his hand shall not be shortned if they enlarge theirs; euen where they haue no other cause but only for Gods sake; when they can hope for no better pay-maister then God himselfe,

And thus farre concerning Hesters obedience.

But what? are all of *Hesters* minde to performe obedience to their superiors: doth *Abashuerosh* finde as faithfull subiects as *Mordecai* found faithfulness in his aduanced Nephew? Surely no; Behold *Hester* so highly preferred yet performes dutie to her Father, and yet *Abashuerosh* being chiefe Commander, cannot finde loyaltie in his subiects: but while he is wallowing in the fulnesse of his pleasures and blessing his soule in his security and false content, his life is sought for by two of his attendants, euen those that he appointed keepers of the doore, or of the entry, for his greater safety: so it followeth.

Verf. 11. 32.

In those daies when Mordecai sate in the Kings gate, two of the Kings Eunuchs, Bigthan, and Teresh, which kept the doore were wroth and sought to lay hands on the King Abashuerosh &c.

In which words the spirit of Gods sets downe a very seareful and yet vsual accident vnto Tyrants: befalling this voluptuous Prince in the glut of his pleasures to *sauce* the same, & so to make him *more without excuse*: namely a desperate treason entended by two of his seruants, whom he put in some trust, tending to no lesse, then the taking away of his life. *Wherein we may obserue these circumstances.*

1. The time when this Treason was committed: *In those daies.* i. in those daies of pleasure and security, of rauishing and deflowring of Virgins, of enioying delight with the wronging and oppression of others; then is this
luxurious

luxurious Prince summoned to his account, then is his life sought for; then is he most in danger.

2. The person is described by whom the Treason is discouered, and the daunger prevented: who is *Mordecai* the seruant of GOD: he prooues the faithfull seruant to his Prince, he that is most despised, yet does most good.

Now *Mordecai* is here described. 1. by his faithfull attending on his office: *he sat in the Kings gate.* 2. by his intelligence of the Treason. *The thing was knowne to Mordecai.* 3. by his wisdom in the discouery of it. *He sold it vnto the Queene Hester and Hester certified the King thereof in Mordecaies name.*

3. The parties are set downe by whom this treason is committed, and that. 1. by *their number*, they were two, Secondly by *their quality*, they were Eunuches. 3. by *their names*, they were called *Begithan & Teresh.* 4. by *their office*, they kept the doore. 5. by *the occasion* mouing them thereto, they were *wroth.*

4. The Treason it selfe is layd open. Namely *to laie hands on the King Ahasuerosh* to take away his life.

5. The person is described against whom the Treason is committed, namely *King Ahasuerosh.*

6. Here is set downe the discouery of the Treason, and that both by the Author as before, and manner of the discouery, namely *inquisition was made and it was found to bee so.*

7. Here is commended vnto vs the execution of these Traitors. *They were both hanged on a tree.*

8. The holy Ghost concludes this history with a notable relation of wise euen of those Godlesse men, namely *it was written in the booke of Chronicles before the King*, that so memorable a deliueraunce might neuer be forgotten, and the seruice of *Mordecai* might hereafter be remembred.

These are the particulars in this memorable accident. And 1. concerning the Time when it fell out,

Ps. 73

Obs. 133.

The prosperi-
of the wicked
slippery and
turbie & to
great daun-
gers,

Malch. 7

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Obfer. 134.

God recom-
penceth the
diligence and
honest care
of his chil-
dren with
good successe.

Malach 3.

2

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Obs. 135.

God recom-
penceth our
loue to others
abundantly
in our selues.

Pro. 11. 17

In those daies] That is when the King is drowning him-
selfe in pleasure, and faith, soule take thy eate : Then doth
the Lord raise some of his owne house to call him to an
account, and to strippe him in a moment of all his vaine
confidence. *So slippery places* are great ones placed in
so doth the Lord since their prosperity with suddaine and
vnexpected dangers, to confound their carnall confidence
therein; *and thereby* to make their dorage much more inex-
cusable that will build their house vpon the sands, which
euery blast will ouerturne.

1. *Whence we may learne*, not to giue the bridle to prospe-
rity, neither to set our hearts vpon it : neither to enuie
it in others, nor to be greedy of it our selues : but *to feare*
in our selues, and *seeke to establish* it in our superiors, by
prayer to God for them, and *watchfulnesse* in our callings.
So doth *Mordecai*, he *sate in the Kings gate*: he was watch-
full in his calling and so the Lord honoreth him to be a
meanes of the *preseruatiō of his Prince*, and *liberty of his*
Church.

So acceptable are the labours of Gods Children in his
eyes: *so doth* he win them in this life, to encourage vs in
well doing : and to *scale vp vnto vs* our eternall reward in
the life to come.

1. *Shall we then say* it is in vaine to serue God, what profit
shall we haue if we pray vnto him? *Noles* vs resolve that
the Lord is faithfull, that he will not forget our labour, be
it neuer so meane, *and if we will trie God* further, we shall
see greater things then these. Concerning faithfulness in
walking in our callings we haue spoken heretofore.

One thing we may here further obserue from the end of
Mordecais sitting at the Kings gate, which was to hearken
how it fared with *Hester*: how it went with those that
feared God: *That he which was carefull* for the good of o-
thers, especially of such as were of the house-hold of faith;
hath this fruit of this his loue redounding plentifully
vpon himselfe; *hee is mercifull to his owne soule*; the
LORD by this meanes offering this occasion for his
owne

owne good and aduancement : *so gracious* is the Lord to recompence the loue of his seruants, *so thankfull* is loue to come but of our debt; *so doth* the Lord prouoke vs hereby to mutuall loue, *so doth he fit vs* to perfection and glory.

3 Col. 14

Use 1. And therefore, as he which will not be his brothers keeper, shall not keepe himselfe; *so let vs* in the name of God shew mercy to our selues, in being mercifull to others: *there is that scattereth and hath plenty*, and *though we cast our bread vpon the waters*, yet *after many daies we shall finde it againe.*

2

But wherein is it, that the Lord blesseth *Mordecai*? he is better vnto him, then he did desire: his desire only was that *Hester* might be safe, and loe the Lord vseth him as a meanes for the safety of the King too; yea this is turned about by the Lord as a meanes of his owne further good. *So bountifull* is the Lord to giue vs more then we desire: *so when we seeke the principall*, doth he cast vpon vs other blessings also.

Pro. 11

Eccle. 11.1

Obf. 136.

Surely Gods children in seeking the best blessings obtaine all the rest.

Math. 6.33

Use 1. Let not then the wicked bragge that they haue more then their heartes desire: surely though they haue their desire, yet God sends leanenesse into their soules: but the Lord will fulfill the desires of them that feare him, yea if they aske wisdom, he will giue them both wisdom, and riches. *Ob* that we were wise to choose aright: that we would first seeke the best, that so we may haue all, *and no mervayle if the wicked loose all that loose the best.*

Psa. 73

Psal. 106.15

Psal. 145

1 Reg. 3.

2

Luk. 10.42

3

Well thus you see Mordecai, is the happie man, that deliuers the Kingdome: the righteous onely are they that safegard Princes: they are the only faithfull subiects: they onely stand in the gappe to keepe out Gods wrath: they onely hold GOD and his blessings to a sinfull nation: none can be truly loyall but onely such. *For they are* *bey for conscience* and not by constraint: *they are led by loue* and not by feare: *they onely haue hope of the reward*, and therefore can beare the burthen with patience,

Obf. 137.

Gods children the onely faithfull subiects.

Eccle. 32

Eccl. 9

Moyles

Exod. 32

they *onely* feare GOD and therefore can truely reuerence men.

Use 1. Behold here then the cause of the desolation of Kingdomes : Namely the want of those that feare the Lord : See the policie of Satan in setting the world most against these that so the wicked may be the contriuers of there owne destruction, *How vaine are* Papiſts to boast of obedience : seeing as their profession bewrayeth, that they feare not GOD : so their practizes do daylie discover, that they will not obey men : *How foolish is policie*, to suggest Religion, to bee an enimie to States; and that these which best serue GOD, are least seruiceable to men.

Surely let Princes secure themselves in the safety of Gods Children : And let Ezechiel be a signe vnto those that haue their eyes in their heads. As for Gods Children let them comfort themselves, though Amos must not come at Bethel : when all is peace, yet Iehorem, shall seeke to Elisha, when the Lord beginnes to roote. And happy is that Kingdome where such Elishaes are. Tea more happy is Sunamite that will stay the Prophet with her. Howsoever it is wisdom is iustified of her Children, nay as you heard before, she shalbe iustified of her enemies. But how comes Mordecai to vnderstand the treason?

Obs. 138.
Gods children skillfull
in discouering of secrets.

Surely the Lord will not hide from his Children what may concerne their good : their apprehensions are deepe, and obseruations to purpose, their knowledge is extraordinary to bould out mischiefs, their experience leads them to gesse shrewedly at mens purposes, by their gestures and countenance : their wisdom enableth them by questions and conference to sound the mindes of men. Howsoever it is. The thing was knowne to Mordecai. So happy are Gods Children by this meanes to secure others : for doth God trie the wisdom of his Children by the iustice of such dangerous secrets, for the better approuing and securing of themselves.

So did our gracious King admirably finde out the treason

treason wrapped vp very closely, in a most vnlikely frame of words, and from a foolish sence gathered a desperate practise.

Use 1. Which though it doth not warrant presumption of extraordinary reuelations, *nor such superstitious concepts* in Popery for the intelligence of hidden matters, *much-lesse* doth approue those deuilish acts which make so many deceiuers, and false Prophets in the world. Yet it doth iustifie that priueledge, that doth onely belong vnto the Saints. Namely, *that the spirituall man discerneth all things*: not onely concerning matters of saluation, but euen so far also concerning this life, as Godlinesse is profitable aswell for this as for that other. And therefore as Princes may learne hence who to imploy in secrets; So may Christians generally learne this lesson, Namely in doubtful cases and extremities, to seeke to such *interpreters*, who can declare to man his righteousness, & discouer his dangers; that so he may auoide the one and embrace the other.

Well it pleaseth the Lord to giue his seruant *Mordecai* notice of the treason: how doth he now behaue himselfe in this discouery of this secret? *Conceale it he must not*, lest he incur the penalty of the law, *the safety of the Prince* requires no lesse: *and the good of the offenders* enioynes the same, that the body being punished the soule may bee saued: *and the common wealth also* shall gaine hereby as being much secured in the detection of such great mischieses.

Which as it iustifieth the equity of our law, which makes concealers of Treason, parties therein: So it discouers the notable deepenesse of Satan in carying these mischieses so closely that they may not be discouered. And hereby also subiects may wisely learne, as to make conscience of their company least they heare what they would not, so to take heed, what *they heare*, and much more what they conceale, assuring themselves, that as their is a time to couer the infirmities of their brethren, from God and men, so their is also a time to discouer their sin, when the *publique good* requires it, and their *private* also will sort therewith.

2
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4
1 Cor. 2.
Amos 3.
5
6
1 Ch. 33.

Obs. 139.
Treason not
to be concea-
led.

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2
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Treason then must be discovered: but yet *warily*: too: I must haue a good ground for what I report; lest I be found to accuse an innocent: and I must be able to vphold the discouery with some countenance and reputation, least I be borne downe in the truth by the greatnesse of the offender

Behold here then the wisdom of Mordecai. He relates not the matter himselfe to the King, lest he might not be beleued, or be out-faced by the countenance of the Traytors: and the King might be enraged, or deiected hereby: and so for this ill newes might giue him but sorry recompence. But wisely he goes to the Queene, with whom he was of more credit, and might more boldly reueale the matter vnto her; whome he knew to be gracious with her Lord, or els by this demonstration of faithfulness might renew her fauour againe. Wherein we may obserue a manifold argument of *Mordecaies* wisdom.

Obs. 140.
Treason to be
reuealed in
wisdome.

I

2

Particulars of
Mordecaies
wisdome
herein.

1. *He takes occasion hereby* to haue access to *Hester*: and so in wise sort to renew his ancient acquaintance with her. Whereas otherwise if he had had no other errand, his coming might either haue smelt of malepartnesse, or of proud ambition.

2. *He procures hereby* credit to the Narration when it shalbe promoted, by so honorable and acceptable a personage.

3. *In this his wisdom* he renewes also his loue to his beloued daughter, he enuies not her aduancement, and therefore will reueale the treason himselfe to take away the thanks from her; but knowing that fauour was mutable and greatnesse iealous; therefore he makes *Hester* the meanes to acquaint the King therewith: both, that she might take occasion hereby, to performe her duetie to the King: and also might by this meanes renew his affections towards her. *Yea Mordecai* might safely haue also a further reach herein; namely to trie the sincere affection of his daughter towards him, whether she would make this an occasion to his good and preferment, or rather

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rather take the glory thereof vnto her-selfe.

Vse. 1. Whereby we are taught, as rather then to conceale treason to scueale it our selues; yet if we may to vse such for the acquainting of the Prince therewith, as may procure more credit to the truth and lesse daunger to our selues: *Let not hope* of reward here make vs to hasty, least the wrath of a King being the messenger of death, it light vpon those that are neereft thereto: Oh how gracious is a word in due season? how doth the author grace the narration: *whereby we may further learne*, to get true fauour to our persons, by being gracious with GOD, and so shall we happily preuaile with men. *And yet*, are not to neglect the meanes of such as are in fauour with men: so we vse modesty, and sincerity therein: *Let vs especially* be carefull, not to abuse them with rumours and falcehoodes: though Princes for a time are delighted with these; yet falce-hood will out and fauour will change: and so bring shame vpon the suggestors, and reporters both.

Thus Hester is also acquainted with this mischief entended against her LORD. What doth she now? doth she conceale it as being sicke of her Husband? *discontent* might haue ministred cause, and *revenge* would haue furthered the mischief. The *incontinency* of the King must needs breede *iealofie*, and *iealofie* is the rage of a man, therefore *he will not spare in the day of vengeance*; some would haue tickled, at this occasion, to haue bene rid of a bad husband, And *lust* here would haue promoted the matter, by suggesting hope of change, *yea ambition* too (by your leaue) would haue putt vp some such *Semiramis*, that so she might raigne alone. *But gracious* Hester hath none of this fuell; religion hath taught her to passe by wrongs, *Rom. 12.* and to ouer-come euill with good: and therefore no doubt she is glad by this occasion to approue herselfe vnto her Lord; and thereby also to put him in mind of the vncertainty of his estate, and so to tender meanes of his reclaiming and amending, *So ought a gracious wife to respect*
the

Obfer. 141.
A good wife
ought to
watch euer
her husband
& to informe
him of such
daungers as
are intended
against him.

the well-fare of her husband, and so did *Abigail* aduize her husband *Nabal*. So must they reueale vnto their husbands what they know concerning there estates as knowing that they are one, and therefore both there good or euill doth go together, and that especially hereby, *they keepe themselves in Gods fauour*, and therefore though the husband should take it ill, yet here is the comfort, the Lord communds it, and he will turne the heart of the husband, as shall be best for both.

Which as it condemneth those murderious wiues that do desperatly seeke the life of their husbands either by direct engines, as *poysen*, *strangling*, &c. or by indirect meanes, as by *faulse accusations*, *vnreasonable braulings*, &c. so it doth also *condemne* those, that flatter them in their sinne, and sooth them vp in their wickednesse, and for feare of displeasure dare not louingly reprove and admonish them therof. *And here also* may wiues learne for there instruction, to discharge their duties vnto their husbands in giuing them notice of such daungers, as they are subiect vnto, leauing the successe to God, who will reward there faithfulness.

Ziba.

Thus Hester discovers the Treason vnto the King, But doth she enuiously concale the first author and so take the credit to her selfe? *no it is said she certefies the King thereof in Mordecais name*, i. she signifies vnto the King that *Mordecai* was the first discoverer; that so the Prince might take notice of his faithfulness, and God might vse this as a meanes for the aduancement of his seruant, in conuenient time.

Obs. 142.
Gods children
ought to ap-
proue and pro-
mote each o-
ther in their
weldoing.

Thus ought the Saints of God to right each others: in acknowledging there good parts, yea in promoting the same: especially they that are already promoted least they should appeare to doubt of the worth of their preferment, which being communicated, if it be good is thereby much bettered and encreased, which is herein secured that it hath more supporters: yea is the more honored, in doing honour to others.

Vse. 1. Where

Use. 1. Where is then their religion that detract from each other, where is their loue, that thinke they do God good seruice in faulſe accusations, and wrong ſurmiſes, how farre are theſe from aſcribing vnto the Saints what is there due which take that from them which they cannot giue them? Oh what folly is that policy which ſeekes to aduance it ſelfe by depriuing of others, what treachery that loue which will aſcribe to others what is none of theirs; crying peace peace while it ſerues there owne turne, but if a man put not in their mouthes they prepare warre againſt him, Mich. 2. 6
Oh what ſhall become of them that iuſtifie the wicked for a reward, and take away the rightcoueſſe of the righteous from him? The ſervant of Chriſt Ieſus is taught here an other leſſon: Namely not to ſlaunder his neighbour, nor falſely to accuſe him; but as he acknowledges GOD, ſo to giue testimony to his gifts, that the good may be encouraged, and GOD may bee glorified.

Laſtly in that treaſons, and moſt ſecret wickedneſſe, are thus detected and met withall, this doth notably iuſtifie the diuine providence in ouerruling ſuch euils, and iudging the ſame, and magnifieth alſo Gods wiſdome, in confounding the policy of the wicked, who by their ſecrecy in euill, promiſe to themſelues good ſucceſſe therein; whereby growing confident, and inſolent againſt the Lord who ſay they ſhall ſee them? who can preuent them? they are iuſtly met withall in their ſecurity either their owne, tongues ſhall fall vpon them: or the fowles of Heauen, ſhall reueale the miſchiefe, or the wiſdome of the Saints ſhall diſcouer the ſame. All which did moſt notably appeare in the diſcouery of the Powder treaſon, and ſo doth exceedingly magnifie the truth of Gods providence therein.

Use. 2. Which as it iuſtifieth the truth of the word, that there is nothing ſo ſecret, which ſhall not be maniſeſted: ſo it is a notable leſſon to all ſtudents of ſinne, not to truſt to ſuch elokes of ſhame for the hiding of ſinne, but rather to conſider,

Obſ. 143.
Gods providence and wiſdome moſt eminent in the diſcouery of treaſons.
leſuits in the powder treaſon.

Pro. 18.

Num. 33.

Eccl. 11.

Psa. 14.

Letter to the
L. Mountragle

consider, *that as he that hideth his sinne shall not prosper in this life, by reason of the bell of conscience attending the same, or else, in that the Lord will finde him out therein by some temporall iudgement: so shall he for all these things, come to iudgement,* and then the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest, that every one may receive, according to his worke: *And when the sleight treasons, & horrible murders shall be wunderfully discovered,* tremble thou *Atheist* at the providence of God, and though thou saiest but in thy heart, *that there is no GOD,* yet remember, that this thought of thy heart, shall one day be discovered, yea the actions of thy life shall cast the dart of thine Atheisme in thy face, and reioyce not, O thou enemy in thy malice against the Saintst, boast not, that thou wilt do them mischief, *and they shall not know who hurt them:* behold, the Lord is their keeper, and *he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye,* and canst thou come so neare God, and hope not to be met withall? *Let this lesson* all sorts, to haue the Lord alwaies before them, so shall they either bee kept from running into sinne, or if they fall, by the gracious presence of the LORD be rayed vp againe.

Thou haue we heard, of the meanes and manner that God vseth for the discouery of this treason. Now let vs a little further consider the treason it selfe: And i. Obserue we the authors of it.

Obser. 144.
Traitors rise
to band themselves
together for the
accomplishment
of their
mischief.

It is said they were *two of the Kings Eunuches.*
Behold how sinne delights in company: especially treason will not be alone; *the fact is horrible,* and therefore company must needs be had to appease and to embolden to the mischief trembling conscience, *The attempt is desperate,* and therefore many hands must ioyne therein; that where one misseeth the other may hit, *And the Lord herein hath an ouerruling hand:* that where one could keepe counsell, by company it shall be reuealed, for that carnall wisdom might proue it owne confusion; do bretheren in euill further each others punishment? so was
the

the multitude of conspirators in the Poulder treason a speciall Conference
 occasion of the discouery thereof, *Let sinners learne heare* betweene Hall
 to take heede of *the multitude, let them not hope by company* and Garnet in
 in sinne to carry it more closely, or accomplish it more des- the Tower,
 perately; *may let them feare* whatsoeuer may strengthen and
 countenance sinne, because as *repentance* is hereby hin- 1
 dred, and *security* encreased, so vengeance is iustly hastes- 2
 ned by the same. *Surely as fellowshipe* in euill is a note 3
 of finnes wisdom and confusion: so not to communicate
 of each others goodnesse, is a marke of it *unsoundnesse*:
 And therefore let not goodnesse dwell alone either in
singulariety or *weaknesse*, let it not feare *infection*, nor can-
 ner it *worthynesse*, but let those that are converted, conuert Luk. 23. 31.
 their bretheren, and let not the fellowship of the Saints Heb. 10. 33.
 at any hand be forsaken: but let vs support one another
 by loue, that grace may be the stronger: and let vs take Gal. 6. 1.
 vnto vs him that is weake, least we also be tempted, labou- Eph. 4.
 ring to keepe the vnity of the spirit in the bond of peace,
 that so we may grow vp together, As heyres of the
 blessing.

Thus we see the number of these Traytors. Now let vs
 a little farther consider of their condition; it is here said, they
 were

Eunuches, that is, they were some honorable persona-
 ges attending on the prince, not geided persons as their
 name may seeme to imply: but because Eunuches, did
 sometime attend in such places, therefore it came to passe,
 that all which were of any honorable employment about
 the Prince (whether they were gelded or no) were called
 Eunuches.

By which it appeareth, what condition of men are vsu-
 ally actors in treasons; namely, not base & inferiour persons,
 whose spirits are deiected, and hopes lie groueling on the
 ground: But men of fort and quality, such as haue aspi-
 ring spirits, and therefore will be seaueling at the highest,
 and what more ready then treason, to setue their ambition?
 such (I say) as by reason of their credit and accesse haue best
 opportunity,

Obse. 1. 6.
 Great ones
 usually actors
 in treasons,
 and why.

- 3 opportunity to committe such hidden mischiefes: Yea such
 as go not without *their disgraces* and *sunbbes* from iealous
 4 and licentious Princes, and therefore are prouoked to be
 auenged of them. *And* (which is the most materiall of all)
Such as haue beene employed by wicked Princes, in trea-
 cherous and vile oppressions of the subiect; and therefore
 5 by the iustice of God, do many times practise their lesson
 vpon their *teachers*, and *such* as by reason of natures gifts
 and the abuse thereof are giuen vp to commit all sinne,
 euen with greedinesse; and therefore no maruaile, if they
 6 will make no bones of this sinne, *by which* they may hope
 to haue a protection for all the rest: And yet are heerein
 met withall, by the diuine iustice, who many times turnes
 this sinne to be *pay-maister* for all the rest; as bringing to
 shame and confusion the Authors thereof.

Vse 1. Which as it condemneth those, that determine of
 sinne by the condition of the person, implying that onely
 base and ignoble mungrells doe conceiue such monstrous
 finnes, as for *generous mindes* and *heroicall spirits* it comes
 not once into their thoughts to commit such outrage:
 whereas we see the *schoole of Rome* hath set downe this as
 a marke of the most *heroicall spirit*, to rise vp against the
 Prince; and experience hath made it too apparant in the
poulder Treason: howsoeuer Popery would haue daubed
 2 the matter: So here generally the best *priviledges of nature*
 are condemned: as beeing the most desperate instruments
 3 of sinne, if they be not sanctified by grace. *And therefore*
here men of reputation may wisely learne their lesson, to
 season their gifts with good *education* and *religion*: that so
 they may be kept within the bondes of obedience to God
 4 and man. *And Princes* also may learne here their lesson;
 as not to *abuse their attendants*, to the hurt of others: so
 not to giue them iust cause of discontent: *Yea all flesh* may
 5 *here learne it lesson*: not to trust in a friend; not to put con-
 fidence in a Councillor. No not to trust the *wife that lies in*
the bosome. otherwise then to subordinate all to God; and
 for his sake to renounce them all: so shal they be faithfull
 vnto

vnto vs, so farre as shall make for our good, and though they bee vnfaithfull, yet *the infidelity of mens shal not make the faith of God of none effect.*

But let vs consider a little further of the name and office of these Eunuches. For their *Names*, they are called *Bigthan* & *Tereſh*: by which it seemes that one of them, namely *Bigthan* was sent with others, when the King was in his cuppes, to conuay *Vasby* the Queene to the presence of the King. And beholde hee is now one of them that cal the King to an account for that his notorious wrong done vnto the Queene. *So iust* is the Lord to *make instruments of sinne, weapons to punish the same*: to the magnifying of his *providence* and *reformation* of *ſ* ſame, or else to make him *more without excuse*, to his greater confusion: but of this heretofore.

Obſ. 147.
God makes
instruments
of sin rods to
punish the
same,

The *Office* that the *holy Ghost* ascribes to these Eunuchs, though their name do imply it to be diuers, yet both concur in this, that it was an *Office* of some trust: and thence we may learne not vnprofitably, that *Treason is in trust*. Those that are most in place of trust, they proue many times the greatest traytors. beause these, being *Princes creatures* (as they call them) new molded to their bent, the more confidence is hereby put in them, the lesse suspicion there is of them. Wher-vpon it commeth to passe, *ſ* *ſ* security is bred in the Prince, & God he is *robbed of his honour*: the subiect he is *pufft vp*, and so prouoked to mischief the Lord he auengeth his glory in giuing him vp to his lusts, & the securitie of his maister, cries aime therto.

Obſ. 148.
In greatest
trust greatest
Treason,

Which as it condemneth that complaint of flesh & blood, that they are deceiued in those whom they put most in trust, because them-selues are the cause thereof: *ſo it doth* not excuse such as are put in trust, because their *sinne is the greater*, by how much the more they were the better thought off.

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2

And yet Princes, also are not to be excused neither: because it is much in them to prevent this mischief. And therefore seeing there must be some, whom necessarily they must

3

must

P.inces to
prevent trea-
chery.

must trust: That they may not be deceiued by them: *Let them make God their confidence*, by keeping them-selues in the bounds of his prouidence: as walking *faithfully in their callings*, and so bring *good examples* to their subiects, not being causelessly *iealous* of them, nor estranging our selues from them: *But* vsing them so, that they may rather see they haue need of them, then that Princes haue indeed other need of their people, then what may as well concerne their good: tempering their loue with Maiestie, and their indignation with clemency. And though they ought to despise none, yet not rashly *admitting* each one into their *seruice* before they haue good approbation of his zeale and loyalty, and therein also to make some tryal before they trust, especially concerning their person or the good of their Kingdome: And when they trust, yet to *keepe such secrets to them-selues*, as are not *fit for them to know*, nor safe for Princes to *reueale* (I meane) these *Misteries of gouernment*, which *extraordinarily*, God reueales vnto them. And when they haue trusted, yet not further to rely thereon, Then considering they now *saile (as it were) in another bottom*, such as at least is apt to leake, they be so far from *remitting of their care, or yeelding to security* (as the manner is) as that now rather they ought to haue a more vigilant eye vnto the maine, and in all humility to cast their care vpon God. As knowing that the right end of the subiects imployment by the Prince in matter of trust, is not to *take away the care of the Prince*, as if then there were no need, but rather to *settle it more constantly on God*: because as it will be *imputed* vnto the Prince for *iealousie*, if hee will not trust his subiect: and therefore he must needs put some in trust least hee discouer a feare of his owne estate, which doth proceed from bad desert: So will it imply further a distrust there, where there is no apparent cause, and so happily prouoke to giue iust cause of distrust.

And therefore seeing those whom he must vse, he must also trust, & yet in trusting of them, *both giue them occasion*

to thinke the Prince hath need of them, as also, that they are well conceived and approued off: least heereby such might either grow to worke upon their Princes secrets, to keep the state in awe, and thereby to get the head: Very necessary it is, that as Princes be wise, what they commit in trust, so they be not secure in the issue of it: but rather watch diligently ouer the trust committed, and to keepe the bridle in their owne handes, by putting it wisely to God. Whereby it shall come to passe: that the subiect hereby perceiuing that he is rather honoured in the case committed, then the Prince disburthened of the care of his calling, will more faithfully behaue him-selfe to giue sound contentment: And so the Prince beeing more secured by the loyalty of his subiect, will bee more still prouoked to rest upon God: In whose hands seeing the hearts of all men are; therefore hee cannot better secure the issue of his affaires, then by resigning the same into the gracious hand of God.

Thus wee see who they are that intend this mischief against y King. But what might the cause be that moued them thereto?

It followeth they were wroth; some-what had displeased them: either they were not preferred according to their desarts and expectation, or they wanted their stipend, according to their places, or they were offended for the diuorcement of *Kashy*; or they were so full sadde, they must needs bee kicking. So apt are such stallions to fume and champe the bridle: So truly is anger the complement of Courtiers: as whereby they show their spirits and uphold their credits; whereby they obtaine their desires and put off their dangers; Whereby they dare their enemies, and hold their friends. By it they iustifie their wrongs, and pay their debts, which as it is no warrant for meane ones to giue the reyne to this sinne, because the greater flies will breake through, when the lesser are intangled. And if it were not, yet we must liue not by examples: but by lawes: so let euen the greatest make this account: that the more they tyot in this sinne without concealment, the deeper they are they

Obse. 146.
Anger incident to Courtiers.

engaged in the fight of God: and the more their sinnes serues there turne in this life, it doth the more make them indebted to it: and when they haue not where withall to pay, they must lie by it in hell, till they haue answered the vttermoſt farthing. Thus wee ſee great ones will eaſely be prouoked: and ſome ſuch cauſe there might be of this wrath of theſe Eunuches, but whatſoeuer the Sire was, the baſtard is anger, and rage likely is the mother of treaſon and outrageous ſinnes, *becauſe* as it *baniſheth reaſon*, and ſo giues way to all vnſeruiſſe ſo *it ends in malice*, and malice will haue blood; *yea ſuch is the progreſſe of this ſinne of anger*, that it will not ſpare it ſelfe to hurt another, *yea none can be priuileged* fro the furious man he makes no difference of perſons, all cauſes are a like.

Obſ. 150.
 Anger the oc-
 caſion of our
 ragious ſinne
 and particular-
 ly of treaſon.

Obſ. 151.
 Princes marks
 of treaſon and
 rebellion.

Vſe, 1 Which as it condemneth natures propheſy, that deter- mine anger to be the whet ſtone to couradge, and ſo giue way vnto it as a *paſſion of credit* and no ſmall aduantage, *ſo we may learne to ſuppreſſe the ſame*, being fully perſwaded, that as the wrath of man cannot fulfill the will of God, ſo much more will it make vs vnſeruiſſeable to men. *The way to doe this we haue taught before.*

Well theſe Eunuches are enraged, and whome is it that they ayme at? Surely no meaner a perſon then the King: *Kings are the markes for every one to ſhoot at. They are faire markes* that may be eaſily diſcerned, and many times they are ſoule markes to betray Gods glory, and therefore he iuſtly giues them vp to be betrayed of their ſubjects: *yea they make bies of their people*, and ſo the arrowes ſome-times rebounds on them ſelues, ſo doth GOD tranſpoſe ſcepters without the ſhedding of innocent blood *ſo when conſcience will not; euen by this feare of danger* doth the Lord keepe wicked Princes in awe, that ſo they may be ſeruiſſeable to others, though it tend to their further condemnation, *ſo doth hee make great ones more inen- tufable*, that will build their neſt on ſuch ſandy foundations.

Vſe, 1. And:

Vſe. 1. And therefore, as this may humble Princes, in the greateſt hight of their happineſſe ſo it may comfort them to, that they have right in an other happineſſe; becauſe this preſent, is ſo vncertaine and ſlippery. And ſeeing by the tickliſhneſſe of the preſent, the Lord prouokes them to aſpire to the certaine happineſſe, and yet ſo, as euen by this tottering ladder they muſt climbe thereto; Oh let them learne to ſanctifie this their preſent eſtate vnto them, that it may ſo farre be ſecured, as may further them to heauen: let them giue God the glory, and maintaine peace among Men by promoting his Goſpel, and in ioyning obedience to the ſame. So did he preferue good Elizabeth from a world of treaſons: ſo hath he preferued our anointed from many conſpiracies, ſo great ſhall bee the glory of the King in the ſaluation of the Lord.

Thus we haue heard the ſumme of the treaſon, now let vs further conſider the proſecution of the diſcovery thereof. We haue heard heretofore, that Mordecai was the man that had the firſt inking of it: hee relates it wiſely to Queene Heſter, and Heſter to the King: what now doth the King in this caſe? doth he preſently beleeu-e it though the reporter were of credit? ſurely No: as Princes are not to be credulous, eſpecially of ſuch reports, becauſe they may wrong themſelues in diſcouering a needleſſe ſuare, yea they may wrong the innocent, who happily may be miſreported: yea though he were guilty yet might they wrong him to, if they proceeded to cenſure before the matter be thoroughly liſted: So euen this heathen Prince keeps decorum herein: ſo it followeth. That after inquiſition made when the thing was found out.

Behold here the equity of this heathen Prince, in a caſe of life and death ſo neerely concerning him-ſelfe, and the prevention wherof conſiſted in ſpeed, yet is he not haſty to credit a report, muchles to proceed againſt a ſuſpected offender before the offence be manifeſted & conuicted. So doth the Lord proceed in iudgement: ſo is innocency preferred, whẽ only accusation goes not current: ſo is authority

Obſer. 152.

ſumme not to be puniſhed before it be conuicted, Gen. 18.

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Exod. 23.

4
Leuit. 19.
Iohn, 7.

Ac, 23.
Festus.

Pilatus.

iustified: when sinne is throughly convinced: and the offender happily prepared to repentance. Doth our law condemne any before his cause be heard?

Vse. 1. By which wee may learne, *as not to belecue reports, without due inquisition; so to condemne such rash iudgements, which execute in the morning, and then sitte vpon him in the afternoone.* I remember pollicy doth aduize in these cases of treasons to strike while the yron is hotte if the offender bee so mighty, as that he bee able to out-dare the law (as the case of *Guise* was vnder *Henry* the third;) here saith wisdom, its good cutting him off first, & then declare the cause for iustifying of such execution. And surely if the offences of such great ones bee dangerous and notorious, seeing the apparantnesse thereof is a sufficient conuiction of the same, it may not be euill pollicie by such authority, as we may priuately cutte him off, especially if he bee of power to preuent publique iustice. So doth God iustly strike before the fault bee published: and so may earthly Princes proceed to execution, when the inquirie and discouery of the fact may hinder the same, and indanger their estates. *Onely herein* they must be carefull, *not to pretend lust for a law*, and to make their wills a rule of it: rightousnesse. This is a prerogatiue which belongeth onely vnto God. As for worldly Princes, they must dye like men; and therefore the liues of men ought to be pretious vnto them, as they will answer *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.* And therefore as suspicion must not blind them, or reports mislead them, to call the life of their subiects into question; so when reports come to them, lette them *not be secure.* It is good to feare when they see but a smoake, least *Gedaliah* loose his life, by contemning the danger: And if by raking vp the ashes they discouer the fire, and so the fact proue cleare and euident, let them secure themselves, and deliuer the innocent, by punishing the offender, according to the quality of his sinne. So doth this heathen Prince very maturely proceed to execution. *The thing being found out saith the holy Ghost*
they

Jerem. 41.

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they were both hanged on a tree. A fit recompence for Traitors, and a iust fruit of their sinne, whose end is death, and whose wages is damnation. And a very safe course to be taken especially with such offenders, whose sparing as it doth hazard the life of the Prince, so it endangers also their owne soules, yea encourageth the wicked, and discourageth the loyall, breedes confusion of lawes and is indeede the very scorne of iustice, and gaffe to all licentiousnes: Whereas by punishment of notorious offenders: the lawes are established, iustice is honored, and iniquity bridled, the wicked humbled, and God himselfe glorified. So Adoniah being spared will rebell againe, but when he is cut off, the throne wilbe established.

Obs. 153.
Traitors are executed for their outragious offences.

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1 Reg. 12.

Use Oh that Princes would looke to it! haue they care to haue compassion on themselves, while through foole-hardines, or fond clemency, they spare such desperate enemies that treason might hop headles and so loyalty might be secured? Surely, though there is difference to be made in a multitude of offenders: yet is the safety of the Prince more pretious then the liues of ten thousand. And better it is, to cut of many rotten branches, then endanger the roote, and hinder the fruit. It is but cruel mercy, that hazards & soule, and very foolish pitty to nourish a viper in my bosome, which hereafter may sting me. But the King of Kings shall teach them true wisdom, that if they be wise they wilbe wise to themselves. Al the doubt may be concerning, these Eunuchs whether they deserued this hainous punishment or no, seeing they missed of their purpose, & were prevented therein. The King had no hurt; and why then should they be touched?

Obs. 154.
The intent of treason discovered, is to be punished.

Surely though purposes are finnes in the sight of God: yet onely actions may seeme liable to the censure of men, Who onely can iudge by the out-side, and so may proceed accordingly: how stands it then with equity that these mens purpose is punished: especially seeing in other offences the intent is not taken hold of: so that the act by any meanes he hindered, or prevented: Indeed, if we do con-

sider

sider sinne in it owne desert, so not onely the *act* but the *purpose*, yea, the very *thought* it selfe deserues eternall punishment: but if we measure sinne by the subiect wherein it is, then seeing God hath reconciled our persons vnto him in Iesus Christ and will remember our iniquities no more to punish them euerlastingly: so neither doth he to any other end chastize them in this life, then may make for the good of the sinner & the glorie of his name.

And to this end serue the lawes of men: Which intending the saluation of the sinner in the inflicting of punishments: as they cannot reach to the *thought* (which is only Gods prerogative) so neither do they otherwise fasten on the purpose then for a greater good: *usually* they are confined to the *outward action*, and so only censure that: and yet therein also, are so farre ouerruled by the condition of the offendor, as to admit qualification for his peculiar good: that if clemencie be fitter for him, it is not to be denied, if seuerity be necessary, yet with this intent, that by the destruction of the body, the soule may be saued.

I Cor. 5.

Reasons why
the purpose of
treason is to
be punished
with death.

I

The intent then of the law being the good of mankind: herevpon it followeth, that though other sinnes be only censured by the *act*, as *Murther Theft &c.* Yet *Treason* is to be censured by the intent: Because though it hath not taken effect, yet being a sinne so dangerous both to the committer and the Kingdom: some such course is to be taken by the wisdom of the law: that such desperate mischiefs might be vtterly preuented: how shall that be done?

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Surely, by inflicting the punishment vpon the intent: that so the intent being met withall, the *act* may be preuented, and all hope cut off from being pardoned for the *act*: seeing, the very intent discouered, is so deadly to the Author. And doth not the general good necessarylie force this seuerity? seeing the suppressing of the Prince, is the ruine of many thousands? yea threatens the destruction of the whole common-wealth? *What should I tell you of the*

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the calling of the King, doth he not represent the person, and administer the office of God himselfe, who if he punish the thought of the heart, as being his prerogatiue, why may not the Prince also punish the intent, seeing he is Gods vice-gerent so to meet with sinne as that the holy purpose of the Lord in his ordinance might be best accomplished, to the good of the sinner, and safety of gouernment? And therefore seeing intent of treason pardoned, doth but giue further breath thereto, because ambition is vn-satiabable, and such sinners otherwise incorrigible, then by taking them in the blade, and so cutting them timely off. Is it not more then time to prevent such desperate onsets by iust seuerity, rather then to giue way through impunity to farther mischief? And shall the Traitor thinke he hath wrong done vnto him hereby? where thought of the least sinne deserues eternall vengeance if he be met withal by temporall iustice for the determinate purpose of a capital crime, which may also be a meanes for the sauing of his soule? And what though he faile in the execution of his mischief? shall the Magistrate therefore faile in the execution of iustice, seeing there was no good will wanting sufficient to discouer the daungerousnesse of the person; and so in wisdom to haue him cut off? And may not the purpose of such euils proue very hurtfull to gouernment? may it not breed *seculousie* therein, and imputation of some bad desert? may it not worke desperatenesse in loose gouernors and boldnesse in the like sinnes?

Let this be a lesson for preuenting of such purposes, and the Lord giue vs vnderstanding in all things.

Thus are these rebellious seruants iustly met withal: And shall disobedient seruants scape vnpunished? had *Zimri* peace which slew his maister? did the seruants of *Ammon* carry their treason clearely?

Surely the Lord is righteous and admirable in his iustice, though some sinnes especially are referred to the eternall vengeance, yet hee will punish this sinne of Treason euen in this life, because it so nere-ly toucheth his

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Obs. 115.
God usually
meereth with
treasons in
this life.

Maieſty, and chalengeſh his prouidence.

1 Rex. 2.

Obſer. 156.

God puniſh-
eth euill ſer-
uants,

2 Reg. 11

Vſe. And therefore let not Traytors hope to go vnpu-
niſhed, though they ſcape at one time, yet their ſinne will
find them out in the end, and *Ioua* ſhal be taken; when
hiſ iniquity is at y full. *And are not diſobedient ſeruants here
alſo iuſtly met wiſhall?* yea ſurely, *Iehoiſi* ſhall haue ale-
profie, and theſe rebellious ſeruants do meet with a halter.

Vſe 1. Which as it may leſſon Maſters, to watch ouer their
ſeruants, leaſt by diſobedience they fall into theſe troubles,
for which they are like to giue an account, though in the
meane time the ſeruant ſmart for it; ſo let ſeruants here
learne to performe obedience for conſcience ſake, that ſo
looking for their reward from God, and not from man,
they may not be driuen to ſuch deſperate courſes. *And as
they* muſt looke for ſuch meaſure, if they breake out into
ſuch preſumptious ſins: So on the contrary, let good ſer-
uants be aſſured, that the diligent ſhall ſtand before Prin-
ces, they ſhall not want euen plentifull recompence.

Obſ. 155.

Gods Chil-
dren not vn-
thankfull for
ſuch kindnes
as they re-
ceiue.

Thus the traitors are executed, and *Ahaſueruſ* is
preſerued for the good of the Church, and who
made the inſtrument thereof but poore *Mordecai*, and *gra-
tious* *Hefter*: two ſeruants of the moſt high God, do this
good ſeruice to their Prince. And ſo is *Ahaſueruſ* aboun-
dantly recompenced for all his loue to *Hefter*: he hath his
life giuen him for a prey: ſo do the wicked fare the better
for the elects ſake, ſo do the Children of God recom-
pence plentifully the good that is done vnto them. *Ebed-
melech* the Black-a-moore ſhal haue his life giuen him for
a prey: and the *Sunamite* ſhall receiue her ſonne to life
for receiuing the Prophet, and *Obed Edoms* houſe ſhall
proſper while the *Arke* remaines there, *Godlineſſe* is ne-
uer vnthankfull to the embracers thereof; her enemies
fare the better for her, and ſhal not much more her friends?
ſhe hath the promiſe of all bleſſings, and ſhall ſhe not
make them good? ſhe preuailes with God, and ſhall ſhe
not preuaile with men? ſhe brings peace whereſoeuer ſhe
comes, and in her pleaſure is liſe: riches and honor, bee at
her

her right hand, yea durable riches and righteousnesse:
Why are then the children of God counted such trouble-houses, could the world indure were it not for them? are not the wicked preserved because of them? *Oh let vs make much the of such profitable guests: let vs learn to be thankfull of them in this point: let vs take hold of the skirt of him that is a lew, and resolue to go with him, because the Lord is with him.* Well the King is preserved; and his life renewed: What must this benefit be forgotten? shall *Mordecaies service be buried in forgetfulness?* No; Behold the providence of God, in providing for his seruant, Marke the care of the Prince that this deliuerance should be remembred; *but followeth.*

And this was written in the booke of daies before the King: That is this admirable deliuerance was committed to perpetuall record in the Chronicles of the Kingdome;

Behold here the faithfulness of God, which forgetteth not the indevours of his children; he hath a bottle to put their teares in; and a booke of remembrance for them that feare the Lord: *Hee makes inquisition for blood, and so remembreth it;* hee causeth the fact of his seruant to bee committed to perpetuall record.

¶ Wee shall we then doubt of the acceptance of our workes; shall wee not expect a plentiful reward thereof? Will not the Lord auenge the blood of his Saints? Will he not wipe all the teares from our eyes?

Oh that we could beleene! How should wee be increased? that we would consider wisely how God records our well-doings, what a spur would this bee to prouoke vs to good works? what comfort against the hard measure of the world? what peace of conscience? What euidence of well-doing? Seeing the Lord makes our enemies to record the same, yea to promote vs thereby to a seasonable recompence.

But what should moue this husband Manarch to haue *Esther* his faithfulness and his preservation thus recorded to posterity? Is this intended as a part of *Mordecais* his recompence

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Obf. 157.
 The Lord taketh notice of the righteousness of his seruants, and causeth the same to bee commended to posterity.

Answered.

¶ The Lord
maketh notice
of the righteous
ness of his
seruants, and
causeth the
same to bee
commended
to posterity.

recompence? Or doth he vse this as a meanes to put him in mind therof? That so in conuenient time hee might accomplish the same? Surely though it be not likely this proud Monarch had any such intent, because al is counted but due, & thankfulness; here is a rare bird: yet no doubt but he had some respect to him-selfe. Namely *by recording so great a deliuerance of his owne person, he might both provoke his subiects to take notice thereof, and so to prevent the like mischies: as also confirme him-selfe the better in the hope of future good successe, and so recreate him-selfe at his leysure with the remembrance therof.* The light of nature leades him thus far, and policy cries ayme therto: that memorable acts should bee recorded to posterity.

Obser. 158.
Records and outward monuments necessary for the memorial & vse of Gods blessings.

And may wee not profitably learne hence to helpe our memories with such faithfull registers: and so not only to blesse God for the *All of writing and printing*: but herein especially to magnifie his prouidence, that by this meanes, *the word of truth hath bene preserved, and purely conuoyed* ynto vs. Surely though the soule be the register of the blessings of God, yet must the flesh vse such meanes to stir vp the heart: as humbling the same, in that it needs these outward helpes, may therby sanctifie and continue the right vse of Gods mercies, in the holy remembrance and meditation therof: let those boast of the spirit, which are not clad with the flesh; and let such despise these helpes, as haue not a body of sinne to hinder spirituall duties. And seeing though *the letter* of the word be not *the power* of it, yet *power* cannot bee conceived, but by meanes of the letter: let such despise the word written, that desire not the power of it: and in the pride of their hearts will not be confined within the bounds thereof.

Anabaptist

Obf. 159.
The blessings of God are to be recorded to posterity.

And doth not the spirit of God herein further teach vs to record the blessings of GOD to posterity; and to commend to, the generations to come the wonderfull things that the Lord hath done for vs? Yea certainly, *this shall be written for the generations to come, and the people that are created shall praise the Lord.* The Lord hath commanded

manded great mercies to be commended to posterity, and hath appointed the monuments thereof to be preserved to all generations: *so were* the rod of *Aaron*, and the potte of *Manna* kept to this end, *so were* *Alters* erected, and new names imposed: to put Gods children in mind of his mercies towards them: *so* did *Samuel* write the office of the King in a book, and laid it vp before the Lord, y^t it might be a perpetual glasse, for the Prince to look his duty in: *so* are the memorable Acts of God, which hee did at the red Sea: and at the riuer of *Arnon*, written in a booke. *So* doth *Iob* wish that his words were written in a booke, that *so* y^e equity of the cause might remaine for euer. *So* when the Lord will publish his wil and haue it commended to the vse of posterity, for our better assurance of the accomplishment thereof, he commands it to be written in a booke, yea in a great volume. Yea not only to a book hath the Lord committed his blessings, but he hath called also the times to witnesse the same, he hath appointed special daies for y^e perpetuall memory of his mercies, to be kept solemnly throughout al generations: this care hath y^e Lord taken for the remembrance of his blessings, as being worthy to be had in remembrance, and profitable for vs to preuent forgetfulness, the maine cause of prophaneesse, and whereby the blessings of God are taken away from vs, & we exposed to the burthen of his Iudgements. And shall not this care of the Lord for the remembrance of his blessings bee an heauy conviction of our vnthankfulness for the same? Shall God thus strue to put vs in minde of his mercies? Shall he cause vs to record them in bookes to posterity? Shall he moue vs to set a part a day for the memoriall thereof for euer? And shall we not bee stirred vp by this meanes to cleaue vnto our God and to root out the name of *Amolecks* from vnder heauen? Who so is wise lette him vnderstand these things, to whom the arme of the Lord hath reueald them.